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NEW STATESMAN

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The New Train Robbery

Three whole years have been consumed in the gestation of the Government's White Paper on transport policy. Alas, if the pregnancy was more than elephantine, the infant is pitiable. Let us begin by praising what can be praised. We are promised a marked increase in the accountability of transport interests to Parliament, through annual White Papers on road plans and tri-annual documents on transport policy as a whole. For far too long, Parliament has had only the faintest notion of how transport decisions are taken; the massive road programme, for example, has been hardly debated at all. Then, Mr Rodgers has done well to abandon the rigid scheme of the Strategic Motorway Plan, created by an unholy alliance of road builders and civil servants, and to replace it by a flexible policy of improving and upgrading existing roads and putting bypasses first. Especially welcome is the pledge of increased spending on bus services in rural areas – although many of the services are so run-down that only the poor, the old and the children rely on them.

But in the main this is the plan of a lazy man, notable for its sheer lack of decisions. Far from switching traffic to the railways, which would have called for work and imagination, the White Paper lops £20m. off the passenger subsidy and demands that inter-city rail services must pay their way. But it makes no attempt to regulate under-cutting coach services, immune from the costs and disciplines of rail safety. And, contrary to the impression given to MPs that rail closures are rejected, Mr Rodgers does put forward a plan that may severely damage the rail network.

His scheme is to shift the onus for closing a loss-making line from the Government to the local authority; if a branch line is unprofitable, he says, let the county pay to keep it open. The advantage to Whitehall is clear enough. The present system, with public inquiries and a final decision by the Secretary for the Environment, makes it hard to shut the lines down. But for a Labour minister to hand this power to overwhelmingly Tory county authorities is appalling. It ill becomes Mr Rodgers, while trumpeting the virtues of consultation, to chop the democracy of the public inquiry. Luckily, this section of the White Paper is described as a 'green spot', and we trust that the crack-brained idea will not survive parliamentary scrutiny.

The basic fault in Mr Rodgers's approach is that he wants transport to take care of itself. If a railway line is losing money, let it close. If the heavy lorry is coming, let it pay a little more but let it come nevertheless. The intellectual poverty of this approach is revealed when the White Paper tries to reconcile its laissez-faire tendencies with its concern over future energy shortages. There can be no doubt that, by putting more traffic and especially more freight on the roads, it will increase the oil consumption involved in transport, already over a quarter of the national total. If we need proof of the failure to produce a rational and equitable policy, we need only note that the White Paper says not a word about the scandal of the company car – heavily subsidised by the Treasury, a rolling epitome of waste and privilege – which was stigmatised by Anthony Crosland in his consultation document a year ago.

Frankly, no one expected Mr Rodgers to inherit the whole body of Crosland's principles, still less to adhere unswervingly to the pledges made in the transport section of the Manifesto on which Labour won the election of October 1974. The title of the Manifesto Group was never much more than a catch-phrase; and, to be fair, election promises often have to be moderated in the light of political realities. Yet there is a point beyond which intelligent adaptation becomes sell-out and flexible development becomes cynical disregard of the Labour movement's purposes. The White Paper makes no attempt whatever to switch traffic from road to rail; it does not reduce dependence on the private car; far from increasing passenger subsidies for the railways, it reduces them; worst of all, it abandons any notion of an integrated transport system. Over the entire field, the philosophy of consumerism has been substituted for that of socialism. Through this process, Labour has been led into a major betrayal.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

A View from Behind

There's no art, somebody says, to find the mind's construction in the face. I absolutely agree. The face can tell you so much, but in a short while its possibilities are exhausted. The body, on the other hand, is a very good indicator of character. It has not learnt how to dissemble. The navel, for instance, never lies. We may be certain that a deep, rounded navel will go with a generous, friendly disposition; that a knobbly, protuberent navel will accompany aggression and meanness; that a pronounced vertical element in the design will indicate hysteria; that horizontality will be associated with an inability to make up one's mind. In the Palace of Westminster, however, there are few opportunities for navel-spotting. Bums are a much better bet.

Mrs Thatcher's bum has all the strengths and drawbacks we associate with Mrs Thatcher. It is seen, at its best, during question time, when the owner of the bum rises to make a point. Leaning forward on the table which divides her from the government front bench, Mrs Thatcher thrusts her arguments home; and, as she does so, she thrusts her bum in the direction of her subordinates. From where I sit in the gallery I get a marvellous view of the Government, but of the Opposition all I see is a bum. It is generously proportioned and firm of purpose. It is energetic, always heaving up and down. It has no trace of frivolous pertness, no coquetry. It does not jut vulgarly in the manner of a Pirelli calendar bum – it has the seriousness, the scope that one associates with an Ingres. What it lacks I feel, is agility – the capacity to think on its feet. When firmness is required, the bum is firm. But when suppleness is called for it seems to falter. All too often, it flounders about, apparently uncertain whether it should be up and thrusting, or whether it might not have been better to remain in contact with the green leather of the front bench. On such occasions I cannot see Mrs Thatcher's face. But I know that bum well and I know when it's uncomfortable.

Prime Minister's Question Time is one of the great swindles of British democracy. How often, after some great crisis or fiasco, the excitement of the press is allayed merely because the Prime Minister has survived 20 minutes of questioning. Simple, dismissive answers, which in any other context would be considered insulting to the listener's intelligence, become here the very stuff of politics. To hear Harold Wilson answering questions was degrading; yet Wilson was considered a master of the art. Jim Callaghan has recently introduced a few experimental reforms, aimed at raising the tone of the occasion and broadening the scope. But very little has changed. Questions are still fixed, to the advantage of the PM. Silly formalities force Members to translate their demands into acceptable gibberish. The sheer brevity of the allotted period means that it is impossible to cross-question the PM properly. The Members are at the mercy of the Speaker's whim.

But for the Leader of the Opposition the opportunities are great. She is not restricted, like the backbencher, in the scope of her questions. She can come back, if she wants, once, twice, three times. She is allowed to make short statements on her own behalf – indeed she is often invited by Callaghan to do so. Mrs Thatcher likes debating more than delivering prepared speeches (she recognises her own shortcomings as an orator), but she cannot normally get through to Callaghan. She cannot pierce the carapace of tired resignation, honest-jimmery and wisdom-that-comes-from-long-experience. For instance, after the announcement of the free vote on direct elections, she demanded angrily to know whether the Prime Minister had abandoned the notion of collective responsibility altogether. Callaghan replied simply that collective responsibility continued as before, except on such occasions as he decided that it should not apply. The brutal simplicity of this answer caused a roar of laughter from Labour MPs, which took up another few precious minutes of Question Time, and there was no way for Mrs Thatcher to get back into the argument. She looked ridiculous, or at least her bum did.

Last Thursday, on the day the policeman was injured at Grunwick's, there was a stormy Question Time in which the Prime Minister was for once rather flustered. But at the end of the day the Tories to whom I spoke were somewhat worried about the way their leader had handled the occasion. By persisting in a line of attack on violence against the police (a matter on which P.C. Callaghan's views are well-known and predictable) and avoiding the Prime Minister's invitation to her to assert her support for the right of workers to join a trade union, she had, it was widely felt, missed out on an important opportunity to make Tory policy on industrial relations quite clear. In 20 minutes, it was observed, she had undone all Jim Prior's work of the last three years. She could perfectly well have got up and said 'Yes indeed we consider that workers have a right to join trade unions, *but* blah-blah-blah.' The fact that she did not do so seemed to indicate a persistently hawkish attitude on the matter.

But perhaps she knows what she is doing. Certainly the remarks of Sir Keith Joseph on Grunwick have shown a Tory interest in capitalising on the Grunwick affair, and appealing to the voters on the most right-wing basis. The fact is that beyond Sir Keith and Maggie there are very few Tories who have made any impact on the country at all. Michael Heseltine may wow the Conservative Party, but he is hardly to be seen as the architect of the new Toryism – more like its door-to-door salesman. Jim Prior is a fig-leaf. As for Sally Oppenheim, after last week's disaster it would be kinder to let her stew in her own juice for a while.

No, the Tory party is precisely as the Left perceive it to be – exceedingly right-wing. What it does when it comes to power may be another matter, but for the moment its appeal is based on the correct perception that Labour's claim to uniqueness ('Only we can get on with the unions') is very much a two-edged sword. The more the press repeats the claim, the more damaging it is to Labour. As for Grunwick, if a Tory dirty tricks department had thought up the dispute and arranged the whole thing, down to the arrest of Audrey Wise and Arthur Scargill, they could have hardly been more satisfied with the result. This is no reflection on the rights and wrongs of the dispute (which seems to me to be perfectly clear-cut) but rather on the effect of its presentation on television and in the press. It is no wonder that Callaghan is worried about it, knowing that at any moment his Government may have to hand in its dinner-pail.

The prospect of a sudden election is very much on Mrs Thatcher's mind. Indeed just over a month ago she started gearing up for an October poll. She remains, like the Early Church, in imminent expectation of the Second Coming. So, though she has not perhaps been particularly conspicuous since the failure of her constitutional putsch in March, she is nevertheless doing all she can to get her bum transferred to the Treasury bench. The polls are not going her way. Why? Is it because of the Jubilee? Did a certain optimism and good feeling rub off on the Government, after all the festivities? It must be galling, if so, for the Conservative Party to find their popularity reduced by the Queen. But then there is a theory that Mrs Thatcher will never get to power, because the country will not wish to have two queens. A primitive taboo, an ancient prejudice will hold us back from insulting the House of Windsor in such a way. If this is so, Callaghan should ponder the consequences. Perhaps a Jubilee election is not such a bad idea after all. If we read that Dr Edmund Leach has been summoned to Downing Street, we shall know what is in the wind.

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Anthony Howard

One Man, One Vote, One Party

The mechanics of voting have never exerted a great fascination for the British. There was probably, indeed, a certain symbolism in the fact that the only complicated election system ever to be countenanced in Britain belonged in the pre-1950 days to the dozen former university seats – where 'clever chaps' were, no doubt, thought able to wrestle with the implications of the single transferable vote and other matters well beyond the reach of ordinary mortals. True, in 1973 a similar system was introduced in Northern Ireland for elections to the short-lived Assembly – but there community necessity was certainly the father of electoral novelty. Not until last week had politicians on the mainland been required to think – not merely seriously but urgently as well – about the mechanics of any voting system apart from the traditional British method of the winner-taking-all.

The Government's White Paper on direct elections – published together with the European Assembly Elections Bill last Friday – certainly leaves the machine-minders in all parties with some hard and rapid thinking to do. Admittedly, what is being put forward, indeed recommended, by the Government is only a contingency plan; it may – and, if the Tories and the *Tribune* Group have anything to do with it, it will – never come to pass at all. That does not alter the fact that, at least for the next three months, regional organisers, constituency agents, and ordinary party activists in the Labour Party and elsewhere, will need to look a regional list system in the face and make up their minds what they think about it.

Their first reaction, if it is at all like mine, will be that what we have been presented with is a strange hybrid. In one important respect indeed the proposed PR/regional list system represents in terms of freedom of voting a retreat on practices we were used to before 1950 – and not just in the former university seats either. For in the old two-member parliamentary constituencies – like Dundee, Preston and Blackburn – the voter had at least the right to choose to cast his two ballots for the man and not the party: he could vote for a Labour candidate and a Liberal candidate, a Labour man and a Communist, even (as many people did one famous year in Dundee) for a Labour candidate and a Prohibitionist; and, of course, in the old LCC and the early days of the GLC – to say nothing of the ordinary boroughs – one could do that as well in council elections. No more. The first thing to notice about the new proposed regional list system is that it strengthens rather than weakens the power of party in British politics.

For under it the voter is given one right – and one right alone. As the draft ballot paper, published in Schedule 4 of the Bill, makes only too clear 'You have only *ONE* vote – place an 'X' under the name of the candidate for whom you wish to vote.' Never mind that, as in London, there will be ten names there for each party ranged horizontally on a single line; only one of them is entitled to receive the individual voter's *imprimatur*. To have allowed anything more than that would, of course, have been to admit the freedom of cross-voting; and against that, someone (Merlyn Rees? Ron Hayward? even the old ward-heeler himself, Jim Callaghan?) has plainly and resolutely set his face.

Yet the triumph of the party label over freedom of individual candidate-choice has been bought at a pretty hefty price. Picture an elector in London confronted with a list of ten candidates – or, worse still, one in South East region where he will actually be faced with 14. If he knows none of them what is he going to do? Play 'eeny-meeny-miny-moe' in the polling booth or

'If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!'

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take the simple way out and place his 'X' under the first name on the list which, reading from left to right, will, of course, be the one with the surname beginning with the earliest letter of the alphabet? But will that, you may ask, matter? Since the whole idea is to vote for the party, won't the votes simply be aggregated and then apportioned so that the winning candidates turn out to be those to whom the party has already decided to give priority? Well, no actually – for that is where the snag comes in. At a late stage in drawing up the Home Office blueprint someone seems to have become seized of the danger of presenting a list over which the party apparatus would, as in Israel, be seen to have complete control. 'Hold on a moment', you can almost hear someone saying, 'hadn't we better just build in the teeniest bit of voter discretion?' And so they have – on the most illogical and nonsensical basis possible. Not only have the 'Abbots' and the 'Bacons' been given an enormous head-start under the terms of the Bill: so also has the bearer of any famous television name – whether he happens to be the real Richard Baker, Michael Parkinson, Peter Snow or not. (It may, of course, be that the object all along was to allow such 'name' candidates to build up so great a surplus of personal votes that they would be able to drag other candidates behind them on their coat-tails; but in that case the whole electoral contraption – with its supposed reliance on party – is nothing but an organised hypocrisy.)

And in ensuring that kind of result, the Home Office has not only pulled a fast one in terms of the reality of the voters' choice; it has, not to put too fine a point on it, made a monkey of the party machines as well. For who, after all, is going to bear the burden of preparing for these regional list elections if they ever do take place? Somehow or other the various party headquarters will have to adapt their often creaking muscles to an entirely new form of electoral exercise. Party organisational areas do not in all cases coincide with the economic planning regions envisaged as the basic electoral units under the Bill. Nevertheless it is the party regional councils who will, presumably, have to organise the new mass selection conferences and draw up each list of candidates.

In the nature of the operation it can hardly be a secret one. Those involved in drawing up an approved list of, say, nine candidates for North West England are bound to know who among the nine came top in the selection ballot – and who, for that matter, just squeaked in at the bottom. What are they expected to feel if they see their least-preferred candidate romping home while the man they all actually wanted to go to Strasbourg turns out to be among the also-rans (perhaps for no better reason than that he happened to possess an unappealing name)? Any equation with the ordinary constituency selection conference is, of course, completely invalid; for, though the disappointed will always form a remnant at such functions, at least they cannot by definition form a majority. That is the new twist that Mr Merlyn Rees and his advisers have now introduced into the political game.

No doubt, the Home Office had to compose its White Paper and draft its Bill in a hurry. Both documents certainly bear all the hallmarks of haste – and, worse than that, of half-hearted compromise. Not surprisingly, what has emerged is an animal rather like the proverbial mule – without pride of ancestry or hope of progeny. Such an outcome will certainly suit a large number, perhaps even a majority, of the Labour Party. But it will not suit those with shrewder minds within the party organisation who realise what the alternative is: an election held in 81 separate 'European' constituencies next summer or autumn with some (pro-European) candidates awash with money and others (anti-European) having to fight on a shoe-string. Nor would the difficulties end once such an election had taken place. The candidate – carpetbagger or not – directly elected by a constituency of 500,000 people is all too likely to develop into a rogue elephant in relation to the rest of his colleagues in the domestic Labour Party. The regional list, far from providing a threat to control party organisation, represents its best available breastplate.

The plain truth is that the Labour Party nationally has a vested interest – and one not merely confined to a modest benefit margin in terms of seats won – in making the PR/regional list system work. It offers, to be blunt about it, the best chance the party has of avoiding a European 'secession' by affluently funded European MPs sharing little or nothing in common with their Westminster colleagues. It is worth, therefore, taking some trouble to get the mechanism right. Mechanics may be boring, but they can be important. Just how important the Home Office may yet have performed a service by demonstrating – if, that is, sufficient Labour activists now get to work to remind it of the facts of political life not as they are imagined in Whitehall but as they are actually experienced on the ground in the constituencies.

Christopher Price

Hope for Cyprus

Now Mr Bulent Ecevit's government is up for confirmation in the Turkish parliament there is some hope of a settlement in Cyprus. It is not yet clear whether his government will be strong enough to make the necessary concessions to break the deadlock in the intercommunal talks which have been something of a charade for many months. There have been some ineffectual talks based on a (Turkish) constitution and a (Greek) map, but no one expected anything to come of them. Everyone has been waiting for Godot, and Mr Ecevit, Turkish poet, philosopher, invader of Cyprus and socialist, seems to have assumed the mantle. But at least the chances of a settlement are better.

There can be no doubt that the principal actors in the drama – President Carter, Archbishop Makarios and Mr Ecevit – are all now committed to solving the problem. Not that their motives are either identical or necessarily straightforward; certainly all three want peace in this potentially explosive Middle East trouble-spot. But President Carter also has problems with Congress until a Cyprus settlement is found. Congress has stipulated 'substantial progress' towards a settlement before the full flow of arms to Turkey can be resumed; and the leader of the Greek lobby in Congress, Representative John Brademas, who will be the main interpreter of the meaning of 'substantial progress', is now Majority Whip in the House of Representatives. President Carter needs his support for other legislation and cannot afford to go over his head on Cyprus. So even if Carter wanted to contradict his election promises and begin, at the behest of Nato, to tilt once more towards Turkey, he cannot. He is boxed in by Congress and has little alternative but to put pressure on the Turks to settle.

Not that the Turks will prove as reluctant as they were in the wake of the 1974 invasion, which raised national pride to fever pitch. Much of this still has to be coped with. The two extreme right-wing parties of Erbakan and Turkes hold the balance in the new Parliament. But the level of military commitment is now a financial drain they can ill afford and the dispute is poisoning their relationship with Europe, where Ecevit's aspirations lie. Now the financial crisis in Turkey has deepened further; there are persistent reports that they cannot even pay the salaries of their diplomatic staff abroad. They need a loan from the IMF and the conditions will be tough; there is little doubt that unless the Government shows willing to solve Cyprus, it will not raise the money. Turkish concessions, if they come, will be the fruits of economic reality.

President Makarios also wants a settlement, and it is only the more intransigent of the Turkish Cypriots who still insist that he does not. Not, one has to say, for economic reasons; with a mere 2-per-cent inflation, the economy in the South of the island is picking up very rapidly indeed. Its astonishing recovery over the past three years is a minor – and largely unreported – miracle. Makarios, however, knows he is the only Greek Cypriot who can unite his community and wants to leave the island with a stable settlement before he quits the political stage; he has said frequently that he will depart, if this is necessary to put the finishing touches to a settlement.

The conditions for a settlement centre round the new central government (the Greeks want it strong, the Turks weak) and the new boundaries between the two zones (the Turks have said they want to keep 32 per cent, the Greeks might go up to 25 per cent of the island) – not an impossible negotiating gulf in international terms. More in question is which bits the Turks will give up. The tourist centre of Famagusta and the citrus growing area of Mor-

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phou are at the heart of the argument – both sides are happy to trade off derelict pieces of mountainside.

The solvent could well turn out to be money – the level of Western generosity forthcoming both to re-energise the economy of the Turkish sector and to make a final settlement about financial compensation possible. They are inextricably connected. The North of Cyprus is impoverished and derelict at the moment, partly because the Turkish-Cypriots lack economic dynamism, but mainly because the Greeks have successfully blocked, in the courts of Europe and beyond, most attempts by the Turkish Cypriots to trade what they see as stolen property – whether this be oranges or hotel bedrooms. It is the first occasion in the civilised world when a legal army has successfully neutralised a military one. It is true that Lord Denning recently gave some comfort to the Turkish Cypriots in the Appeal Court, but his fine words about an autonomous state in the North of the island were not stricly relevant to the technical decision of the court; in any event, few travel agents want to risk litigation. It is easier to sell package holidays where there is no argument about who owns the hotels.

Compensation to the dispossessed Greeks is thus an essential prerequisite to the lifting of this legal blockade; and it is compensation which, however euphemised and laundered, Europe and the US between them (and even ironically the Greek Cypriots themselves) will be asked to pay. The Turks cannot possibly afford to; and it is right that the West should pay proper retribution for the colonels' regime, the Sampson coup and the Turkish invasion. The full degree of collusion may never be known, but there are many in Cyprus who believe it was quite as flagrant as Suez. Moreover their responsibility goes far wider than this.

In reality justice and human rights for the Cypriots count little in decisions which hinge on the demands of Nato. The need to safeguard the British bases and the sensitive telecommunications hardware on the island are paramount. Not that anyone (except perhaps the British taxpayer) wants the British to go away. Certainly not Makarios. Useless though we were in preventing the Sampson coup and the Turkish invasion, these bases do provide welcome employment and ensure a measure of stability. (Without them the Turks would certainly have taken Nicosia airport and might have occupied the whole island.) It would, however, be more convenient for all concerned if the fiction that they are part of England's green and pleasant land could be removed, and they could be seen to be what they are – Nato bases. So at least the Cypriots could then demand a decent rent for them. Then there is the awkward problem of who is going to guarantee the final settlement. The British can scarcely be asked to do so again. One suggestion is that everyone from the Russians to the Americans should be asked to underwrite the agreement, if it comes.

It's a big 'if'. Those who know the difficulties best are the most gloomy. Even if there is a settlement, will it hold? It didn't last time and both sides were to blame for the breakdown. There's an utter lack of institutions to weld the island together – many Turkish Cypriots have had no contact with the Greeks since they were walled up in Nicosia in 1963 – and many teenagers on the Turkish side have never seen a Greek in their lives. A hope, perhaps, is a plan for one military base to be the intercommunal University of Cyprus and Centre for Middle East Studies. Cyprus has never had a university, and since the Lebanon war the American university there has little future. The idea has been mooted before but it was turned down by the Greeks as eroding the Hellenic nature of the island; when a settlement does come, the soil should be fertile enough to do just that, and rebuild a Cyprus which is less of a military outpost and more of a centre of reconciliation – and designed neither for the Greeks nor for the Turks but for the Cypriots.

Alexander Cockburn

The Great B-1 Saga

For the last 17 years the Pentagon and the aerospace industry has resolutely fought for a strategic bomber to replace the B52. For the 17 months preceding his election Jimmy Carter more or less gave it to be understood that he was opposed to the $100,000m. programme for the new B-1. Now, this week, it looks highly possible that the President may accommodate himself to a major reversal of previous campaign rhetoric and quite ridiculously give the go-ahead to one of the greatest boondoggles of the post-war period.

At the time of writing it is still just conceivable that Carter will not succumb. A few days ago, in the wake of visits and entreaties by pro- and anti-B-1 congressional delegations he professed that his mind was still 'open', and that he would take the great decision in seclusion. But last Monday the House of Representatives voted for the B-1. And the mood in the Pentagon, which I visited last week; seemed genial.

It should not be taken for granted that the last days of this week will see a straightforward announcement that the $100,000m. programme involving 244 planes (with support systems) has been given the green light. Carter, last year, was always careful to say that he favoured continued research and development of the B-1; even so the likelihood is that he or his spokesmen will now talk of a 'partial' maintenance of the programme involving the construction of 90 or so of the bombers, costing about $150m. apiece. That is exactly how the B-1 has won the battle for life over the long years since 1960.

At that time the successor to follow on from the B-52 was the B-70. This high-flying strategic bomber was pushed by the aerospace industry in Southern California and nurtured by Vice-President Nixon. Two of them were actually built; one crashed and the other was flown to an Air Force museum in Dayton, Ohio where it now reposes, a source of wonder to occasional travellers. But, under Kennedy, Defence Secretary Robert McNamara strangled the B-70 programme and it looked as though the powerful bombing lobby within the Pentagon had suffered defeat. But the airforce doggedly refused to give up, coming up with such acronymic sport as the SLAB (subsonic low altitude bomber), LAMP (low-altitude manned penetrator), AMPSS (advanced manned precision strike system) and finally AMSA (advanced manned strategic aircraft). The notion, following the destruction of Francis Gary Powers's high-flying U-2, was to produce a low-flying bomber which would sweep in below the Russian radar net and, in dumping its lethal cargo, satisfactorily complete the strategic triad of bombers, submarines and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

In the last, lame days of the Johnson Administration, Defence Secretary Clark Clifford assigned nearly $80m. to fund the design of a manned strategic bomber and simultaneously Nixon and his aerospace advisers built up pressure for the successor to the B-52. After Nixon's election the B-1, zealously nurtured in the Defence Department and in Congress by Melvin Laird and California businessman David Packard reached the all-important contracting stage. In 1970 the contract was awarded to a Southern California firm named North American Rockwell, now known as Rockwell International. This was appropriate since the B-70 – its ancestor – was built by an ancestor of Rockwell International called North American Aviation. More important than names was the fact that although the winning company submitted the highest price and worst performance specifications (as against Boeing and General Dynamics) it had the advantage of being on Nixon's home turf, and badly needed a new contract.

The plane, a veteran of years of lobbying and political manoeuvring, is in fact now more or less of a cripple, and has half the range of the B-52 it was meant to replace. A report from the General Accounting Office, perhaps the most damning in a long series, found that the B-1 does not fly as fast or as low as it was intended, vibrates horribly at high speed and has suffered in tests from wing flap failure, cracking of turbines and kindred defects. Furthermore, its engines are peculiarly prone to avian interference: i.e. the B-1 can be downed on take-off by a flock of birds. A chagrined Air Force recently found a crack in the tail section of one of the test models and indeed it appears that it is not really able to hug the ground and sweep under enemy radar, flying rather directly into the screen where it will show up like a Christmas tree. And, of course, whereas an ICBM would reach the USSR in 30 minutes, the B-1 would take six to eight hours and thus reach target once the war was over.

The military chieftains have not denied

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these seemingly devastating charges. They have fought instead a guerrilla war of attrition against common sense, tiring the enemy by sheer persistence before charging in triumphantly to capture another huge appropriation. Not for them the argument that it would have been cheaper to retro-fit the B-52, or even that the cruise missile has rendered the B-1 superfluous. The B-1 is the glamour child of the bombing lobby inside the Air Force, an infinitely more desirable appurtenance of the profession than flying old B-52s, manning a missile silo in North Dakota or worse still toiling for a commercial airline.

And, of course, the actual capabilities or strategic necessity of the plane weigh little against other potent persuasions. Rockwell International and its lobbyists, along with the Pentagon, have argued in Congress that the programme will produce 192,000 jobs in 48 states and involve 5,000 subcontractors. The company even got members of its workforce to lobby Congressmen. In fact, the B-1 has now reached a point in its life where it is doubtful that President Carter could kill it, even if he tries. Mere edicts are not enough. The other day some watchdogs found that the Air Force, denied by Congress a prized and costly computer, had simply bought the thing piece by piece and assembled it anyway – at the taxpayers' expense.

On a political level all sorts of arguments are being mustered in the bomber's defence. One of the more interesting is what we might call the 'reverse bargaining chip' ploy. It is mooted, in the context of the SALT talks, that the Russians are actually far more frightened by the prospect of more accurate missile heads and indeed the cruise missile. Thus, as the B-1 roars into production, they will allegedly be undismayed since they are aware of its failings. In theory the Americans will, in playing the B-1 chip, then abandon something else. In fact, the Russians will keep something of theirs, such as the 'backfire' bomber. The American Defence lobby will not abandon new missiles, the Russians will consequently not abandon their new missiles and the reverse bargaining chip will have achieved another resounding triumph.

There is, evidently, a gloomy aspect to the B-1 saga. Between 1968 and 1972 aerospace employment fell by 42 per cent. There is still vast surplus capacity in the industry. In the mid-1970s the military Budget leaped up to cope with this crisis. Less and less of 'conversion', the perverse notion that aerospace plants could be used for peaceful purposes such as mass transit or solar equipment. Nothing is heard of it now. The economy needs stimulation. The results are the promulgation of such insanely expensive projects as the Trident submarine, and the B-1, the latter kept alive by the California industrialists, the Air Force and indeed the labour unions.

Quite apart from the B-1 it already appears that the Defence aerospace complex has little to fear from the new Administration. The case of the B-1 will particularly highlight age-old military-economic logic: that it is simply impossible to end a programme this far along, even though the plane itself is more or less useless.

New York

Michael Harloe

Dog's Dinner

In November 1974 Tony Crosland announced that there was to be a fundamental review of housing finance in order to find 'a system that is more efficient and more equitable than the present dog's breakfast'. Last Tuesday his successor, Peter Shore, at long last and after many hesitations, announced the results of this exercise (now renamed the Housing Policy Review) in a Green Paper notable for the clarity of its language and the political acumen of its proposals. The Green Paper cleverly steals much of the Opposition's thunder by adopting some of their pet schemes, for example a council house tenants' charter, special help for first-time buyers and schemes which would enable people to half buy and half rent a house from their council. In addition it makes a number of other sensible and welcome proposals, principally those which would require councils to prepare comprehensive housing strategies for their areas and free them from much detailed government intervention in how public funds were used to achieve their strategic objectives. Yet the document also contains a good deal of waffle, vaguely exhorting the building societies to give 'due weight' to social factors when deciding whom to give mortgages to, for instance. It also contains much which simply repeats and reports on developments which are already occurring, a useful resumé but hardly anything to get excited over. However, by far the most important and depressing feature of the Green Paper is its failure to come to grips with the ramshackle and highly unsatisfactory system of housing finance which presently exists. Yet it was precisely this situation which, two and a half years ago, convinced the Government that a fundamental review was necessary.

Among the questions which concerned Crosland when he established the Review

were how many houses the country needed; how much should be spent on new building and how much on improvement and rehabilitation; and how housing costs should be distributed. There were several reasons why it had become increasingly important to find answers to these questions. Although the general quality and availability of housing had increased considerably since the war, it had become clear that massive problems still remained in some areas (London was an obvious example). In addition, many newly formed households could be expected to come on to the housing market in future years. So it made sense to ask how much housing, either newly built or renovated, would be needed and what level of public and private resources would be required to provide it.

Whatever the eventual answer to these questions, it was clear that government subsidies only had a very haphazard relationship to housing need. For example, many local authorities who were not facing long waiting-lists and a pressing need to build new houses nevertheless received generous subsidies which enabled them to charge low rents, whereas other harder pressed councils obtained insufficient help and had to push rents or rates up sharply in order to continue the battle to meet housing needs. Owner-occupation had an even more inefficient and inequitable system, because the main method of subsidy – tax relief on mortgage interest – was highly regressive, bringing great benefits to those on higher rates of tax living in expensive houses but giving relatively little to many of those who were struggling to become owners. Finally, there was the extremely worrying fact that as inflation had continued an increasing proportion of public subsidy, in both the main sectors, had gone into helping people already in council housing or their own homes to meet their housing costs and less and less public money was going into building and improving housing for those still in greatest need. With public expenditure on housing unlikely to rise much in real terms in a hurry, this was and still is an extremely disturbing trend.

How does the Green Paper seek to answer these key questions? It does not. First, the document makes no assessment of likely future requirements for new building and improvement, merely stating that if present trends continue there will be a substantial reduction in poor housing conditions. In particular it admitted that nothing can be said about how much progress can be made in the most deprived areas. It is indeed very difficult to forecast these matters but one might reasonably have expected some targets to be set beyond the self-evident aim of 'a decent home for all families at a price within their means'.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly the Green Paper gives no indication what

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soever of how much money will be required to achieve the 'substantial reduction' in poor housing conditions and to meet the needs of new entrants to the housing market. Yet this is wilfully to ignore the crux of the whole problem which is to assess how much public money is required to add to and improve the housing stock in order to achieve a basic standard for all, given the facts that public resources are severely limited, government faces many other pressing demands for money and, finally, that an ever greater percentage of what is spent is going to reduce individual housing costs.

This balance of political forces is clearly recognised and accepted in the Green Paper. On the one hand, general public housing subsidies are to be concentrated increasingly in the areas of greatest need and public housing rents should, it is suggested, rise no faster than money incomes. Thus the principles of equity and efficiency in the use of subsidies (which as a table in the technical annex to the Green Paper shows already ensure that the poorest council tenants received the biggest subsidies relative to income) are to be maintained and developed in public housing.

Yet these prudent, rational and, some might say, socialist principles suddenly become untenable when owner-occupier subsidies are considered. Any changes, for example in the direction of phasing out the amount of tax relief individual owner-occupiers receive as their incomes grow over time and the proportion spent on their mortgages declines, will apparently create havoc with family budgets and the housing market. This is, of course, a nonsense if such changes were to be gradually phased over a number of years as experience has shown in, for example, Germany where the principle of withdrawing subsidies has been partially adopted. Moreover such a change would improve the possibilities for helping those at the bottom end of the owner-occupied market who, at present, get least out of the subsidy system. Instead the Government has opted to maintain the assistance given to those who need it least, pointing out in defence that many of these people are on 'middle' rather than 'high' incomes – i.e. £7-8,000. The extraordinary nature of this argument can be gauged by considering what would happen in the present political climate to a proposal to maintain substantial subsidies to council tenants in this income bracket!

Michael Heseltine declared in the House that Labour had been forced to adopt Conservative policies for the mainstream of its new proposals. Crosland had the dream of producing a more rational housing system in which some of the least justifiable inequalities were removed and promised the slaughter of any sacred cows that stood in the way of such an objective. Someone somewhere should surely have reminded him what the price of such sacrilege was likely to be.

Patrick Wintour

Keep the Blue Flag Flying Here

Some otiose institutions seem to exist solely to rescue flagging journalists. At first sight, Aims for Freedom and Enterprise, one-time Aims of Industry, looks like that kind of highly dispensable outfit. If ever there is a letters page editor left short or a Fleet Street diarist stumped for trivia, Aims and its amiable director Michael Ivens are only too happy to oblige with a superfluous communication or mischievous pamphlet. What to most people looks like public relations gimmickry is to Aims a guerrilla war fought by advertising slogans and big cheques. Ivens evidently relishes the flak of the front line.

But for the last three years Aims has been developing among friends a little initiative of their own. They have been inventing a tradition. Unable to see why the Left should have all the fun, let alone why the Government should even consider making 1 May a national holiday, Ivens has been pressing on Britain a Free Enterprise day, an idea he has borrowed from the Finns who have been having these black masses to capitalism for 30 years and more. It is an unlikely event if only because the bourgeoisie rarely make up the demonstrating classes except whene – for instance in France in 1968 – their existence is threatened. The British ruling class seem to be particularly inhibited about celebrating in public – even at Ascot they do it in a private enclosure and it still does not escape Jack Jones's puritanical glare. Undaunted, Ivens is out to boost the morale of capitalism, to eradicate the masochism and guilt-ridden chest beating that he says occurs whenever businessmen gather together.

Though, of course, the New Right are all comrades 'in this great rat-race of ours' there is a little sectarianism creeping in among those who disapprove of the appropriation by Ivens of the Left's rituals of resistance. After all, if Tories are to preserve the objectivity and rationality of the market and protect it from the perversions of the political arena, then life must be depoliticised and the primacy of privacy respected. *Manifestations* by the Right (especially when they take the form of a mirror-image of the Left) are a sign of weakness, not strength. Far better to allow the market quietly to flow and regulate our lives and let the Institute of Economic Affairs explain to those who wish to know why this is natural and right.

However, inappropriate or not, freedom's red letter day is 1 July when there is a spot of prize giving and such unFriedmanite things as a free lunch for Britain's boardroom freedom-fighters. Surprisingly, the free enterprise persons of the year on the two previous anniversaries were two intellectuals, Ralph Harris of the IEA and Keith Joseph. This time their private Oscar (an extremely abstract *objet d'art*) has been won by Freddie Laker for his battle against state monopoly airlines, while Christopher Bailey, the Bristol ship repairer, takes the silver for his selfless anti-nationalisation campaign – which all seems slightly ungenerous to Brian Walden and John Mackintosh's parliamentary contributions. And, to show that Aims has not become horribly anti-intellectual, Tibor Szamuely has won a posthumous award.

It must be admitted that there have been a few birth pangs during the establishment of this great day, like the song for freedom that was sung at the first lunch to the tune of the *Marriage of Figaro's 'Non pui andrai'*. Apparently it was sung with as much conviction as a Labour cabinet rendering of the *Internationale*. If you see some of the words of Ivens's anthem, the bashfulness is more understandable:

> We shall fight for our rights and our freedom
> We shall fight for our land and our children
> We shall never give in to appeasement
> For at last freedom's flag is unfurled.

Apart from the tilting at windmills in line three, it is hard to imagine commuters spontaneously bursting into rhapsodic song on the 5.30 back to Sevenoaks. Ivens defensively protests that 'we don't pretend it's Christmas or part of the Liturgy yet. It took a few years for May Day to catch on and we're making comparatively rapid progress.'

However, Aims' earlier intention of becoming a mass movement, which dates from the adoption of the more philosophical name, has been preempted by the emergence of the National Association for Freedom. Ivens once talked of expanding outside the company base and winning 2 million members to the cause. But it is NAFF that has wooed the housewives and shopkeepers. Neither does Aims really provide intellectual sustenance for the Right. Though it may have taken the monetarist line for some time, its pamphlets are unconvincingly assertive and shallow by the standards of the IEA and the Centre for Policy Studies. Nor is Aims rigidly practical, except as a pressure group of sorts for the construction industry from whom it gets much of its funds. It does not, for example, provide for companies blacklists of militant trade unionists, which is the *forté* of the well-funded Economic League. Aims is left to act as a middlebrow safety valve for industrialists too neurotic about government grants and union wage demands to say anything which does not keep them sweet. However, it is when nationalisation is on the Labour Party agenda that Aims comes into its own. The coffers rapidly fill up (£600,000 was spent getting rid of Benn and Bennery) and the kid gloves and the anniversaries are set aside. But even that looks like a case of never giving in to appeasement. The Labour Party's shopping list has always been much bigger than its purchases. At least Free Enterprise day is one way for Aims to stave off its crisis of identity when Labour has no shopping basket out. And even if no one else needs their literature, there are those grateful journalists.

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Stanley Uys

Can Carter Help South Africa?

Under mounting pressure from the 'front line' black states to stop pussyfooting over Rhodesia, the Foreign Secretary, Dr Owen, has put the Anglo-American peace plan into top gear. Instead of calling another of those interminable conferences which invariably collapse in recriminations, Dr Owen this time has directed the Graham-Low negotiating team, after consultation with the relevant parties, to draw up its own independence constitution, which will be presented to Mr Smith. If Mr Smith accepts the constitution as a *fait accompli*, the next stage of the peace plan will be introduced: the transitional arrangements to phase out white rule and phase in black rule, including possibly despatching a Commonwealth peacekeeping force to Rhodesia. Finally, a Zimbabwe economic development fund will be set up, with the emphasis on getting the Rhodesian economy on its feet again, rather than on providing security for white Rhodesians, as Dr Kissinger envisaged it.

So far so good. The snag, as usual, is – Mr Smith. If he rejects the independence constitution then everybody goes back to square one, with one difference: that the heart, surely, will go out of future peacemaking efforts. Already, the 'front line' presidents, much as they want peace, and the Rhodesian nationalist leaders, have virtually come to the end of their patience with Mr Smith, and are reconciled to the UDI issue being settled in the bush with guns. This is why they are calling on the United Nations for Western governments to take decisive action against Mr Smith's regime. They know this could wreck the climate in which peace negotiations could continue, but they have little faith in these negotiations anyway. They know, too, that decisive action against Mr Smith, such as an oil boycott, means applying sanctions in some measure against South Africa itself. This, too, does not concern them unduly: they see South Africa as Rhodesia's lifeline, and Western governments as incorrigible imperialists who have overriding ties with the whites of southern Africa. There is a fundamental parting of the ways taking place in southern Africa, with Dr Owen pleading desperately to be given a few more months to win a peace settlement. If Mr Smith again blocks, it will be the end of serious negotiations.

The question arises whether a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia is relevant anyway. The purpose of a settlement, after all, was to prevent the destabilisation of Rhodesia and southern Africa, to arrange an orderly transfer of power to a cohesive black government, and to allow whites and blacks to work together in some harmony after the changeover. Are any of these aims still realisable, or has the dividing line between a negotiated settlement and a guerrilla victory been so eroded that the benefits of the former will be dissipated in the confusion of the changeover when it occurs? The Rhodesian problem is so fragmented now that Dr Owen must feel a negotiated settlement is like trying to put Humpty Dumpty together again: the black nationalist movement is split four ways between Mugabe, Nkomo, Muzorewa and Sithole; Mr Smith's own party is split, thus limiting such freedom of movement he might wish to exercise; and Mr Vorster, who was prepared once to live with any black government Rhodesia might elect, now has serious misgivings over the militancy and dissension in black Rhodesian ranks.

The fact is the rot has set in over Rhodesia, and the question South Africans are beginning to ask themselves is whether the same rot will not set in over their country. South Africa, of course, has been an incubus on the West for nearly 30 years now, but two new factors have appeared on the scene. One is the emergence of a mass youth movement against a black consciousness background, and the other is the high priority rating the Carter administration has given to southern Africa. The reaction so far of the South African government to the 'children's revolt' has not been encouraging. The revolt has destroyed the Urban Bantu Council in Soweto, but the community council which the Government proposes to put in its place seems to be just as unacceptable to the young blacks; and if this is the kind of change the Government envisages in the biggest conglomeration of urban blacks in South Africa, where is the progress?

As for the Carter Administration's interest in Southern Africa, this is a product of its human rights crusade and its concern over a possible race war. The human rights crusade should not be underestimated: in its southern Africa context, it is a very practical policy, and its genuineness is guaranteed by the presence in the Carter hierarchy of black men such as Andy Young and Don McHenry. But it was Mr Mondale who spelt out the policy to Mr Vorster when he met him in Vienna in May. He said he tried to convey to Mr Vorster 'the depth of our convictions . . . there has been a transformation in American society of which we are very proud . . . We cannot accept, let alone defend, governments that reject the basic principle of full human rights, economic opportunity and political participation for all of its people regardless of race . . . I believe our policy is clear, and I believe the South African government now appreciates that it is deeply in American experience and values.'

Central to the Carter Administration's foreign policy is rejection of what Mr Young calls 'knee-jerk' reaction to communism. This cuts the ground out from under the appeal both Mr Vorster and Mr Smith have made to the West to recognise the whites of southern Africa as allies in the struggle against communism. While the Carter Administration no doubt is concerned about Soviet expansionism, it is confident that, society for society, communism cannot match the Western way of life. Dr Brzezinski explained this view in a recent book when he wrote: 'Because the Soviet Union does not appear likely to experience in the near future a domestic phase of open intellectual creativity and experimentation, its attractiveness as the socio-economic model for contemporary communism, one capable of intellectually and morally captivating the imagination of mankind, will probably continue to decline.' This kind of thinking is profoundly important for US policies in southern Africa: it will set the US increasingly on a path where it will have to choose between white and black in southern Africa, and because it knocks out the prop from under the whites' appeal to the West, it will force the US eventually to support the blacks.

This does not mean that the US necessarily will be able to do anything constructive about the situation in southern Africa, or at least in South Africa itself. The message it is taking to South Africa is a novel blend of its human rights crusade with what one commentator has called '19th-century mercantilism'. Mr Young explained this economic aspect of the Carter policy in greater detail when he told *Africa* magazine that the US Government had learnt from Angola that 'any government in southern Africa will not remain communist for long . . . Africa has got to sell its resources to the West. It's got to turn to the West for capital to develop its resources, which means that governments that emerge in southern Africa are going to be, essentially, mixed economies with strong ties to the West, regardless of their ties to the communist bloc.'

When Mr Young went to South Africa as the guest of Mr Harry Oppenheimer, he appealed to the self-interest of the country's 4 million whites, urging them to shake themselves out of their 'paralysis', and work for a prosperous, multiracial society. This injunction to whites to seek their destiny in a free-wheeling, non-racial Western-type market economy hardly identifies Mr Young as a radical. Nor, it should be noted, does Mr Young have much time for white liberals. 'I don't mind tough, hard-nosed people,' he said, referring to Mr Vorster. 'They're a lot easier to deal with than idealists . . . who are very honourable, but in the crunch they can't produce.' But Mr Young is not telling the whites anything they have not heard before. Repeatedly, Afrikaners have been exhorted to come out of their laager and join the free-for-all, and repeatedly they have vowed not to sacrifice their Afrikaner identity on the 'altar of Mammon'. Suspicion of the foreign capitalist who wants to break down the race barriers for profit is rooted deep in the Afrikaner psyche, and although many Afrikaners have come up in the economic world since the Second World War and are more self-confident now, they are still haunted by the apparition of that legendary capitalist, Hoggenheimer.

Two other flaws can be detected in Mr Young's thinking. One is that, right or

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wrong, most blacks in southern Africa identify the West with the white regimes that have oppressed them, and this gives communism a head start among them. The other is that young blacks do not share Mr Young's faith in the West's free enterprise system: they feel it has let them down, and intellectually and emotionally they reject it, even if they have only the haziest idea of what socialism or marxism can offer them. These young blacks resent Mr Young's assumption that their countries' economies, even if nominally independent, will be tied nevertheless to the Western market system; and it should be remembered that the leaders of the Black People's Convention (the umbrella organisation for black consciousness movements in South Africa) refused to meet Mr Young when he was in South Africa.

If neither the 4 million whites nor 21 million blacks in South Africa will be persuaded, therefore, by Mr Young's arguments to reach a settlement of their clashing interests by negotiation, what steps are left for the Carter Administration to take in Africa? It should never be forgotten that no whites in Africa voluntarily surrendered their power and privileges: the decision was taken for them by metropolitan governments sitting thousands of miles away. If there has been movement towards a settlement in Rhodesia and Namibia, it is because South Africa has tried to assume the role of metropolitan power towards these 'colonies'. But where is the metropolitan power that will take it upon itself to settle South Africa's fate? Will the Carter Adminstration be prepared to play this role? In the final resort, this is what the international power game in South Africa will be about, because beyond that lies the white-black struggle, in its dreadful and starkly familiar terms.

Peter Wilby

A Mean Death for a Free School

The White Lion Free School, Islington, is one of the few survivors from the many alternative community schools set up in Britain over the last decade. Now, as it nears the end of its fifth year (and survival for so long in a species characterised by high initial hopes and rapid degeneration is itself a miracle), the school will almost certainly have to close. Its initial grants from charitable foundations have run out and, last week, the schools sub-committee of the Inner London Education Authority decided that it could not spare £20,000 a year to keep the school alive.

White Lion has 40 school-age children (ranging from five to 16) and ten pre-school children. Their future matters because they attend the White Lion School and they learn things there, which most of them never did and never will do in an ordinary school. But what matters equally is that White Lion, in an area of pre-war council housing where social workers will call as frequently as the milkman or the postman, represents one, small, encouraging approach to the growing social and educational problems of the deprived inner cities.

The school is free in two senses: there are no fees, and attendance is voluntary. Although there are no rules, lessons, curricula or timetables, the staff are adamant that reading, writing, and manipulating numbers are essential skills and that they have to be mastered systematically. So in the mornings the children are explicitly 'expected' to work on their basic skills. The expectation is reinforced both by the lack of alternative activities at that time and (if a child insists on playing table tennis or watching television) by the incessant nagging of the adults. In the afternoon, each pupil, in effect, writes his own timetable, choosing from such activities as swimming, horse riding, art, pottery, woodwork, museum and zoo visits, music, gardening and country walking.

The central philosophy of the school is that, beyond a strong encouragement to acquire basic skills (amounting, for the more easily intimidated younger children, to a compulsion), it is no business of adults to tell children what they should learn and when they should learn it. But that doesn't mean anarchy. On the contrary, it means more careful planning and record-keeping. Each child has an adult responsible for keeping a close eye on his progress and for giving him a straight, unequivocal assessment of how he is getting on.

When White Lion approached the ILEA (for the second time in three years), it asked to be given the money for 30 of its children that would otherwise have been spent on educating them within the maintained system. The authority's own divisional office admits that it would have difficulty in placing those 30 children in any ordinary school. In a few cases, the divisional office has actually sent the children to the school and, indeed, juvenile courts have sometimes given the White Lion the job of supervising offenders. The stumbling block to funding is the ILEA's insistence that White Lion deregister as an independent school (it has passed a Government inspection) and accept a grant as a sort of rehabilitation centre which tries to get difficult children back into the mainstream system as quickly as possible. That condition is unacceptable for two reasons. First, the school would have to lose the ten children who have never disrupted or truanted from a state school and who, therefore, provide an essential element of normality and stability. Second, the condition strikes at the heart of the free school philosophy. The truancy centres, maladjustment centres, sanctuaries and sin-bins that have mushroomed as adjuncts to the state system over the last decade are based on the assumption that there is something wrong with disaffected children who truant or misbehave. Their function (as authority sees it) is to reform the children and return them, cleansed and purified, to the mainstream. White Lion, however, believes that the system, not the children, is at fault. It wants to change education in ordinary schools, not persuade children to accept it, and it does not agree that the free school style is suitable only for semi-delinquents. But that attitude, of course, strikes at the heart of the ILEA's philosophy. One of the arguments frequently used by the authority's politicians is that funding White Lion would cast a slur on the work of the authority's own schools. How very odd, then, that the heads of several Islington schools, including White Lion's nearest primary school neighbour, should be among its firmest supporters.

Another ILEA contention is that funding would be the thin end of several wedges, leading to financial support for fee-paying private schools and for dozens of other community projects. Yet it is perfectly possible for the ILEA to state that it is prepared only to aid non-fee-paying, non-selective schools, on the same *per capita* basis as state schools. (If Westminster School cares to open its doors on this basis, so much the better.) As for other community schools, if they are as good as White Lion ('it is impossible not to admire the dedication and skill of its founders and the excellent relationship between adult and child that is evident throughout', reports the authority's own chief officer) and can get started under their own steam, they deserve the money.

The ILEA's stand looks shabbier still when you compare the British record in alternative schooling with other Western countries. Denmark has a century-old tradition of parents starting their own schools with state help. In the US, more than a million children attend publicly-financed alternative schools. Free schools also flourish in Australia and Canada. Yet, apart from the White Lion, Britain has just three small alternative schools in Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow, which are also wobbling on the brink of disaster. No education authority has yet given a free school significant financial support. Despite the substantial research budgets of the Schools Council and the National Foundation for Educational Research nobody has bothered to evaluate the White Lion experiment.

The trouble with the British Left is that it lacks the courage of its convictions. Tory authorities up and down the country shamelessly subsidise fee-paying schools to the tune of some £23m. a year. The Independent University raised £1.5m. from big business to get started. Oxford and Cambridge colleges, already rich, have the nerve to launch public appeals for new buildings. Yet, for the sake of some piffling bureaucratic principle, the Labour-controlled ILEA cannot even part with £20,000 (which it will have to spend anyway) to help a handful of dedicated idealists and deprived inner-city kids.

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Stephanie Williams

The Language of Separatism

A gang of schoolboys, in the green uniform of a wealthy Westmount school, are clambering down the aisle of a crowded bus in Montreal. 'See that guy over there?' says one. 'I thought he was retarded – until I discovered he was a French Canadian.'

Fifteen years ago the kids in Quebec were into elephant jokes and water pistols. The Singing Nun (in French) shared honours with Gordon Lightfoot in polite, English Canadian adolescent society. Irish jokes Quebec-style may not necessarily be a sign of the times, but they certainly strike a raw nerve in the French Canada of today.

Behind closed doors the English are referring to the province's premier, René Levesque, as a mini-Hitler and his regime as fascist. Those who voted for him feel they have been betrayed; those who didn't that their worst fears had been fulfilled. Levesque won last November's provincial election on a 'good honest government' ticket, presenting the Parti Québecois as the only sensible alternative to the Liberal Bourassa government that had been branded with corruption and excessive expenditure. Despite a campaign by Bourassa waged around a slogan of 'Dis "non" aux séparatistes', Levesque and his colleagues successfully concentrated the debate on the need for social democracy, a solid economy and reforms for trade unionists.

But seven months after the PQ victory, formal steps towards social democracy have been shelved pending the result of a referendum to determine independence for the province from the rest of Canada. The province's economic forecast continues grim, with unemployment hitting 10 per cent and major companies withholding decision on reinvestment until the first major legislation proposed by the new Government, Bill 1, which will restrict the use of English in public, has been settled. Labour Minister Jacques Coutûre announced last month that the province's workers would have to wait for the promised new Labour Code which would have eased the process of union organisation, accreditation and security, and accept instead a basic 'social contract' guaranteeing minimum wages for non-union labour based on provisions prepared by the previous Liberal government.

In the meantime, the party's whole effort has been concentrated on fulfilling the main aim of their written manifesto: namely independence, with the consent of the people, for Quebec. In that it will mark an important psychological break with the rest of Canada, the acceptance of the Language Bill is critical for the party's credibility and the future of the referendum.

The Bill is largely the creation of the vice-president of the party, the Minister for Cultural Development, Camille Laurin, a prominent Montreal psychiatrist who was a founding member of the Parti Québecois. One of the few Péquistes to have held his seat since 1970, it is the emotional and chauvinistic way he has promoted the Bill which has had the most grass roots appeal among the French, most embarrassed members of the French intelligentsia and most alarmed the English. Laurin has openly stated that the Bill is based on a policy of 'ethnocentricity'. Confronted by arguments that Quebec's meagre population can neither withstand the pressures of an English-speaking North American culture, nor, once the Language Bill is in effect, afford the consequent fall-off in immigration, Laurin has replied that Quebeckers are determined to breed.

A woman telephoned, weeping, from Chicoutimi, to tell Laurin he had given them back pride in their language. Around the same time he managed to turn an invitation to address the Canadian Club into an insult by speaking English with exaggerated care 'because if I had spoken French you would have understood nothing'. It is all good racist stuff, and not a little of it is undeserved. You might well ask why members of English families who have been settled in the province for years cannot speak French, and how they have held the economic advantage in the province for over 100 years. The answer lies in part in the role which the Roman Catholic Church has played in the province. The Church, too, managed to create an ethos that today remains at the base of the PQ's nationalist appeal.

When Wolfe defeated Montcalm in 1759, and the English left the French their Civil Code, their Church and their language, it was the Church that took over as guardians of the French colony's culture and values. In the face of the English state, the Church had a vested interest in maintaining the agrarian status quo, nurturing a sense of national identity and isolating the people as far as possible not only from the dangerous free-thinking English, but from France.

By the early 1900s the Church still held full control of family life, of education, of books that were read and even the way its congregations voted. Its message was well ingrained. The only way the French Canadian people could preserve their unique identity and gain salvation was to remain Catholic, and on the land. Sons of the more prosperous might become priests, lawyers, doctors or journalists. They must not dirty their hands with commerce.

This at a time when the province was nearly half-urban and Montreal the financial and industrial capital of the Dominion. As scores of English, Canadian and American businesses opened in the province, there were only three major French Canadian industrialists at work. By the Forties, Quebec was well embarked on the process of industrial and urban growth which characterised much of North America, but its capital remained foreign. There were still far too many priests and lawyers; those few who opted for training in industry or the sciences found themselves forced to function as if they were English. Class and national demarcations had become clearly drawn.

The provincial government was in the hands of Maurice Duplessis' Union Nationale, an intensely conservative party which opened the doors to continued exploitation of French labour by foreign capitalists. Through a combination of fervid nationalist appeals, a fiercely protectionist attitude towards federal overtures and electoral corruption the Union Nationale held on to power until it was broken by the deaths of Duplessis and his successor at the end of the Fifties and the Liberal victory of Jean-Lesage in 1960.

It was the Lesage regime, with its programme of reform in welfare, labour and education which first identified the state with the true interests of French Canada. It put Quebec on the road to economic determination and conceived for the province an important cultural role in Canada as a whole. In the past the Church had been seen as the main instrument for survival of the French Canadian people; today it is the State. And under Levesque, separatism has become the new populist religion.

It is against such PQ tactics as planning to proclaim Bill 1 on 24 June, St Jean Baptiste Day – the most important festival in the calendar of the religious French Canadian nationalist – that Pierre Trudeau and the Federal Government are helpless. Trudeau still retains hearty support in Quebec, and his standing nationally has been recently reaffirmed in the surprise Liberal victory in a by-election in the traditionally Conservative Prince Edward Island. The Federal Government could disallow Quebec's language legislation, a step that would automatically bring calls of interference in provincial affairs and accusations of continued discrimination against the French. Parts of the Bill which are unconstitutional could be referred to the Supreme Court – whose members are all Federal appointees. If Trudeau decides to loosen the constitutional bonds between the provinces and the Federal Government, Confederation is already so fragile that the pressure from the Western provinces for the same freedoms from Ottawa that Quebec might be given could, ironically, bring about just that economic community of provinces with Quebec that Levesque wants.

Levesque is a leader in the finest French Canadian tradition: articulate, competent and charismatic. 'A socialist who means well' says one French Canadian observer who supports the leftist aims of the party but deplores the chauvinistic aspects of its nationalism. He and others have suggested that Levesque may be losing control of the more extreme elements in his party and it is they who are responsible for the more repressive notes in the party's programme. Whatever the truth in this, Levesque and his party of professionals, teachers and journalists have access to all manner of propaganda to play on the province's inbred sense of inferiority. This time, the men, their policies, and their nationalism may well combine to bring Quebec successfully out of Canada and into her own.

Quebec

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London Diary

☐ A month abroad puts local concerns and passions into perspective. Grunwick wouldn't have rung a bell in Kotor or Kozani; a highly intelligent and politically conscious Greek had trouble recalling who was this General Amin I talked about; and only one man, in the remote corner of Yugoslavia where the people are mostly Albanians, asked me whom Prince Charles is going to marry. I enjoy resting from the news but can't stop wondering what's going on. Poland hasn't exploded despite the grim predictions of most of the Poles I know, and I'm happy to say that Tito didn't die while I was in Yugoslavia. Yet the banners celebrating his 85th birthday and 40th year as party leader – Yugoslavia's Jubilee – seemed designed to insist that he's still in good shape, and altogether the country seemed nervous. Friends in Belgrade, as in Budapest the week before, were anxiously discussing Brezhnev's assumption of absolute power and scanning the fine print in the new Soviet constitution. I hadn't grasped that it makes a formal distinction between relations with capitalist states and relations with other socialist states, basing the latter on the sinister principle of 'proletarian internationalism'. Yugoslavia, my friends pointed out, is a socialist state. While I watched the rhythm of the scythes and the hay-wains trundling peacefully along, I couldn't resist the feeling that something nasty is going to happen in Europe before very long.

☐ Back home, I set myself to re-absorb the local atmosphere by going up to the Grunwick gate on Tuesday morning. A young woman with a 'Stuff the Jubilee' button kindly guided me to a tree which afforded shelter from the rain. The crowd consisted of the sort of serious, concerned, mainly youngish people you'd find at an anti-apartheid demonstration. Teachers were much in evidence, but I saw a bus-driver and a railwayman too. As usual, you have to be on the spot to grasp what's played down by the press. The papers have concentrated on the number of pickets, but surely what's significant is the number of blacklegs (or 'loyal workers'); if it falls below the point at which the firm can meet its customers' demands, that's decisive. The full payroll before the strike was 429. I saw a bus driver in at 7.50 a.m., and an experienced picket told me that there would be one other bus arriving at 10. The bus I saw, though a double-decker (which looks better in photographs) had nobody on the top deck and some empty seats below. There's another gate, but the work force must be drastically reduced and the late start for some of the blacklegs doesn't help production either. The police, out in great strength, refuse to let pickets talk to blacklegs though on this day there was no hint of violence; but I gather that the strikers visit their former workmates at home, for personal relations remain good. Quiet persuasion may do the trick after all.

☐ Every time I travel in eastern Europe I am struck by the increasing nostalgia for the past. 'We must overtake and surpass the 18th century', someone wrote sardonically in the visitor's book at a Moscow art exhibition. The rebuilding of the Royal Palace in Warsaw was a grandiose attempt to conciliate this sentiment. In Hungary, I found it combined with private enterprise. A factory worker has devoted his spare time to building a medieval castle. He bought the stones and other materials legally and employed no labour, so he has broken no law. Still, he won't be able to live in his castle because the authorities decline to lay on water and electricity. He is showing visitors round at the equivalent of 10p a time and selling photographs, and I was told that he's likely to recoup his costs.

☐ I've also been reflecting on a curious example, which ought to appeal to Professor Galbraith, of how human volition creates economic activity. In Budapest I was warned that the main road to Belgrade is hell, and in Belgrade that the main road to Greece is hell, at least as far as Nis. I avoided both; there are pleasant and tranquil alternatives. These main highways are thick with heavy lorries, all driven – whatever the registration – by ruthless Turks. The route goes all the way from Istanbul to Vienna. The traffic isn't by any stretch of the imagination justified by the productive activity in this part of the world, nor by the volume of exports and imports. Indeed, I suspect that the lorries are half-empty under their tarpaulins, and that's why they keep up such a terrifying speed. The point is that Turkey has massive unemployment. Many of the drivers own their vehicles under some sort of mortgage scheme and are in business as contractors. The lorries are labelled TIR, which stands for Turkish Independent Rip-off.

☐ Most of the the British cars you see on the Continent are not cars, but Dormobiles. I have a Dormobile myself, and it's a great advantage to be able to pull off the main road and be in bed, if you choose, within five minutes. If you depend on hotels, your holiday is beset by continual financial worries. When the travel allowance was raised in 1970 to £300, it seemed that this was equivalent to taking off all limits except for the really rich. But now, what between inflation and the fall of the pound in relation to most European currencies, I reckon that the allowance isn't worth much more than £100 of 1970 money. The best value (once you get there) is undoubtedly Greece. The pound, which bought 80 drachmas when I first started living on souflaki and retsina 20 years ago, still buys 63. Daily expenditure – for picnic lunch, restaurant dinner, and a nice clean hotel room with a shower – needn't be more than £10 for a couple.

☐ An interesting encounter was with two young men who had crossed illegally – on foot over the mountains – from Yugoslavia to Albania. Since their native language is Albanian, they melted into the landscape for quite a while. Eventually they were spotted, they were imprisoned for a month and expelled, and on returning to Yugoslavia they were imprisoned for another month. They said that, although it would be unthinkable to live in Albania because of its insane political regime, material standards were higher than in the adjacent part of Yugoslavia and 'everything is more modern'. I was very surprised; I report this testimony for what it's worth.

☐ A minor form of mental torture is the repeated sight of an advertising slogan you can't understand. Billboards all along the Adriatic Highway (500 miles of it) announce *'Minikrekeri* ZOO SAMPION BRIDGE'. The 's' has an accent giving it a 'sh' sound. I *think* this means: 'little crackers which you can eat when visiting the zoo, attending athletic championships or playing bridge'. But I daresay I'm quite wrong.

☐ I do my best with Slav languages but am intimidated by the shortage of vowels. How can you cope, after all, when the language itself is called *srpski-hvratski*, a square is *trg*, a familiar city is signposted as Trst, and an island is called Krk? Hungarian is baffling too but *etterem* means a restaurant, which I find sensible. In Greek I get around not too badly, but when flustered or after a few drinks I forget that *ne* is the word for 'yes'; the Greeks have a lot of fun with this. When invited into an Albanian home (I shan't pretend to know any Albanian) I was worried by the fact that everyone said *Mir dita* on my arrival and *Dita na mir* on my departure. Can it be that the former expression means 'It's a pleasure' and the latter means 'A pleasure it was not'? Those girls did seem to giggle rather uncontrollably.

Mervyn Jones

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Mrs Jacobs said she certainly thought the Council might have a prostitution drive. Cllr Michael Downes thought any campaign should be instituted from the County and they should ask districts in the area to carry it out. But Council chairman Cllr Joe Clark considered the start should come from the parishes to bring in the local people. – *Wilts and Gloucester Standard* (F. E. C. Hughes)

☐ It appears that, despite doom-laden prophecies of the collapse of British society, in-born insularity still makes many Britons reluctant to live and work abroad, even temporarily. Lack of proficiency in foreign languages is also an obstacle of entry at certain levels of the Commission, but not the most senior. – *The Times* (A. B. Atkinson)

☐ A former property developer Mr William Jack Godfrey, 50, whose debts from a 1975 bankruptcy may eventually exceed £27 million, successfully applied for his discharge yesterday after offering to pay his creditors £1,000. – *Daily Telegraph* (J. R. Soames)

☐ In a week where we have all had to endure the squalid homosexual confessions of the Labour MP Tom Driberg, it is refreshing to be reminded that at least the Heir to the Throne knows that 'camp' refers to a makeshift dwelling – and that 'gay' has something to do with love and cheerfulness. – *Sunday Express* (E. G. Breeze)

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University Forum

Sue Slipman*

Broadly Speaking

The trends which came together in 1968 to oust the old right guard from the National Union of Students, to bring the Left to power and to activate large numbers of students, were by no means homogenous. But at the root the impulses were all more idealistic than revolutionary. The 'system' was identified imprecisely as a life-crushing force, grinding down creativity, constricting individuality and sapping the energy of young people. At an international level, the Vietnam war symbolised the corrupt major power attempting to crush the fight of a courageous people for their freedom. While at a national level, mounting resistance to the imposition of discriminatory fees for overseas students expressed a genuine altruism. The creative energy unleashed in this process began to transform student unions, previously polite debating societies aping the manners and customs of their elders, into something capable of action and argument.

The anti-imperialism expressed through the massive anti-Vietnam demonstrations was for the vast majority a gut reaction against cruelty and repression rather than a mature class analysis of imperialism. But though the masses were not necessarily moved to deep political analysis, there was a connecting link between them and a New Left vanguard which sought to define itself through upheavals in student life. The link broadly was the attempt to assert human values above a sterile power struggle. If the majority were not involved in the action, let alone the theory, they identified with the objectives. Sadly, the intervening years have seen the separation of the vanguard from that majority. There is a different mood in the student movement.

The Left has also changed. While many adapted and developed their political analysis, others attempted to impose their 'revolutionary' solution on the mass movement wholesale. As a result, the mass movement has had to withstand the onslaught of one revolutionary theory after another, seeking to define a character for them that simply did not fit the bill. These people now show signs of maintaining ideological stranglelholds on student unions which are as life-denying as the old forces. The attempt to ban students from their unions on political grounds is symptomatic (and most dramatically expressed recently in the debates on the Middle East).

This contempt for the mass movement and the character of a union organisation has severed the connecting bond established in the late Sixties and created an equally contemptuous attitude on the part of the masses for sections of the Left. In many cases the majority have voted with their feet and ignore whatever happens in the union. Indeed in some unions there is now an anti-political tendency which simply refuses to discuss non-student issues. And yet ironically enough, the original 1968 movement led to a tradition of wide discussion inside NUS and the removal of the no-politics clause from the constitution in 1971.

The discussion of international issues in unions is a case in point. Almost every student would reject the brutality of the fascist dictatorship in Chile but too many of them now would also reject any serious discussion of Chile, because they are fed up to the back teeth with interminable analysis and counter-analysis of an ultra-Left more interested in adopting the correct line on the exact nature of the sell-out of the working class by Allende's Popular Unity than they are in solidarity work with the victims of the repression. Now while I believe that the sin of sectarianism lies more with the ultra-Left groupings, the Broad Left is by no means free of the disease. All too often the whole Left is a coffee-bar clique lost in its own self-justification, intent on entangling still further its own crossed lines.

This has created a vacuum which the Right has been only too happy to fill. In my opinion the growth of the Right in the NUS is the result of two separate trends – the sectarianism of the Left and the populism of the Right. Many of the students who currently vote for the Right in student union elections would never vote for right-wing policies but, for the moment, the Right do not have to fight on policy issues. They win on the distaste many feel for a Left they do not trust. Many who currently identify with the Right do so for misguided but democratic reasons; they remain, in essence, the same idealistic force eager to assert human values but they no longer believe that the Left is the embodiment of those values. A sizeable section of democratic opinion has been temporarily won by the Right.

Admittedly, the student movement has never been uniform in class composition or ideology, though the education boom of the late Sixties, swiftly followed by the recession, has created a more cohesive social grouping. 1968's protest against values has had to face the reality of an economic, political and ideological crisis where simple protest must give way to the politics of change. Increasingly, the need to define the details of a democratic education system, incorporating the ideals of the student movement, means finding the right techniques to achieve our goals, as much as coining epigramatic and emotive slogans. Our goals are democratic – the involvement of as many people as possible in deciding the kind of education they have. It is only natural that our strategy to achieve this should also be democratic. But the need to stop the demoralisation is ever more pressing in the light of the cuts in education and the inaccessability of the levels on which such decisions were made.

In the long run the Right Wing will not be able to maintain policy positions in the interest of students. For one thing, the advent of a Thatcher-led government would quickly lead to disillusionment. Their approach to the NUS has been to pose as the democratic force in opposition to the totalitarians of the Left. They have used populist issues – the penitential point, however, is that the issues were there for them to use and were created by the Left's own sectarian approach. Nevertheless, despite the jockeying for position, the eremitical power struggles, the internecine warfare within the Left and between the Left and the Right, the idealism of the majority of students remains. Occasionally, it is released – such as during the teacher unemployment campaign of last summer. Then, forces as diverse as nuns and ex-policemen training to be teachers went into action with thousands of younger trainee teachers to demand jobs for themselves, and in some cases more importantly, because they cared about the future of education and the children they hoped to teach. The student movement showed that it was not trapped in simple economism; it was protest which stemmed from the will to make a positive contribution to society.

The mood of protest can now be a force for democratic change – but it must demand a leadership from the Left which is worthy of the movement. Which means a Left that has learnt its lessons, shed its sectarian shadow and is genuinely capable of building bridges to the heart of the movement. It must no longer treat student unions as surrogate political parties and it must above all respect the rights of all students within their unions, regardless of their political opinions. Equally paramount, the Left must recognise that at a time of growing political crisis when the ultra-Right is established as an alternative to democratic paths, the major political objective is the maintenance and protection of democratic organisations. But imposing restrictions on participation of democratic forces by promoting an unrealistic ideological homogenity is leaving the movement prey to the ultra-Right.

We must recognise that within a democratic alliance there is room for differing ideologies to co-exist and confront one another, but also to agree on major objectives. At the current juncture the ultra-Left is bankrupt. The Broad Left for its part is fighting to shelve its own history of ideological straight-jacketing. If this can be achieved it will help liberate the best impulses in the student movement again. But to achieve this, we must be as democratic in our practice as we are in our slogans.

* *Sue Slipman is a member of the Broad Left and took over as President of the National Union of Students last month.*

University Forum will not reappear until the new academic year begins in September. In the meantime manuscripts will be welcomed from anyone, students or staff, involved in higher education. Contributions, which need not be confined to higher education subjects, should be marked University Forum and addressed to the Editor, New Statesman, 10 Great Turnstile, London, WC1.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Bizarre Bedfellows

It will be recalled that some months ago I was able to supply a very fascinating journalistic 'scoop' and inform our readers of a hitherto well-kept secret, namely that Jack the Ripper was none other than Queen Mary. During a recent week, I had planned to let another cat out of the bag but I see that a prominent newspaper has beaten me to it, in this case with the news that the evil genius behind Burgess, Maclean and Philby in their 'prentice years was the outwardly genial and now dead Donald Beves, a don of Kings College, Cambridge.

I have, of course, known this for many years. My eyes were opened in a rather curious way. Beves (now that the truth is out at last, I feel that I can no longer refer to such a devil as 'Donald') was a keen amateur actor. Ditto, and in 1932 we were involved in an open-air production in the King's fellows' garden of some classical play translated into English by Provost J. T. Sheppard (of whom more anon). During the rehearsals for this super-ghastly theatrical venture Beves put me up in his guest room in college and, one day when he was out lecturing, an old school friend of his called, asking to see 'Shrimp' Beves – hadn't set eyes on the chap since they were in the Rugby School XV together, with 'Shrimp' as scrum-half. The unsuitable sobriquet put me instantly on the alert. Beves looked to weigh around 17 stone, and no former scrum-half, however keen on tuck, goes physically to pot to quite that extent. Very suspicious. And that was by no means all. Next day a grocer's boy delivered 18 packets of 'Trillo' bird seed, with not so much as a budgie to be seen anywhere in Beves's rooms, and imagine my stupefaction when, over our lunch, Beves asked me to 'hear' him the morse code (great muddles between 'Z' and 'X').

Feverishly investigating while he was out, I discovered all – the underclothes ingeniously fitted with inflatable rubber tubes to give that large and jovial appearance that so misled the gullible, the carrier pigeons kept in a crate under his bed when not flapping their way gamely eastwards with who knows what fiendish messages, and the somewhat makeshift wireless telegraphy set. Next week I shall tell how Provost Sheppard was, on a rash trip to Leningrad in 1925, kidnapped, ruthlessly stripped both of his identity and of his clothing and popped, loudly protesting, down a salt mine, being replaced at Kings' by a supremely skilful Russian male impersonator called Olga Ushakov, the real fifth, or is it now sixth, 'man' behind etc., etc. All rights reserved.

Ever since, during the war, Hess decided to come over and see us, floating down by parachute in Scotland, I have tried to make it a rule to be surprised by nothing. It's calmer for the nerves if you can manage it, though I am not unfortunately always successful. For example. Readers of this page will have noted that only on very rare occasions (Christmas was one) do I get the full spread entirely to myself. As befits our politics, it's share and share alike and sometimes I've bulged over into Letters to the Editor and next week the letters have bulged right back at me. My most frequent literary bedfellow, my column winding round his verses, is the highly gifted and felicitous Roger Woddis, and the most frequent pictorial one has been the equally splendid cartoonist, Colin Wheeler. As week follows week, it's been jolly to see who or what ('This India,' for instance) I am teamed up with. There have been, as this week, those generous offers of NS cut-price rates for students, and the readiness to send the NS to holiday addresses so that nobody misses a week's reading by sensibly deciding to nip off for a fortnight and 'unwind' at the Grand at Clacton. Then there was that 'teaser' from the *Daily Telegraph*, anxious to secure ever more readers for a thoughtful article called 'Is Britain a Fair Society?' (in a word, no). And there has been a cheering announcement from the Data Protection Society ('Computers and Privacy'), bringing comfort to those of us who like to keep ourselves to ourselves and don't wish to have our size in shoes and our favourite colour available to all.

And then what happens? A surprise, not to say shock, that rocks me back. Lulled by the above entirely wholesome matters, I suddenly find myself cheek by jowl with the 1977 Sex Maniac's Diary (disbelievers, or those wishful to refresh their memories of the diary's contents, have only to refer to their back number of 12 November, 1976, when everybody's minds should have been on nothing but holly and turkeys). Among other treats, it boasted a series of 'erotic aphorisms' and a Kink of the Week for every week. Purchasers were encouraged to keep it in pocket or handbag and 'whip it out and refer to it at any time during the day or night'. But not all the information it contained was reprehensible. There was a reference to 'new positions', which I took to be a helpful indication of permanent or temporary jobs available ('She has taken a position as an audio-typist'). But then it was back to the old themes, with, as a final slap in the face, the diary announcing itself as being 'even an appropriate gift for your naughty granny in Devon'. There ain't no such a person, comb Bude and Bideford as you may.

In the office I said nothing by way of reproach. My face told all, and those responsible kindly calmed me down by linking me with something much more in my line, a *Times* advertisement for its *Higher Education Supplement* ('full-length profiles of leading American intellectuals', and just the job for setting the pulses racing in a totally pure manner). Lulled once more, I quietened down and pressed on, and then what? Why, the Adeptus Bedsofa, 'a comfortable sofa that effortlessly converts to a double bed'. Some of us are not married, yet, so could anything possibly be in more doubtful taste? My hurt and wounded looks were once more remarked in the office and they bracketed me with Royal Mint Chocolate Liqueurs.

But since then, I've hardly known whether I was on my head or on my heels. We've had to resort to Adeptus again (twice) and I was subsequently placated with the *Times Educational Supplement* (not as high as the *Higher*, but serviceable enough). They've soothed me with music (Decca and Solti and Debussy). They've flooded me with wine ('Sale of the Century' Fino Candido, not all vinous descriptions being so disarmingly candido). But what next? One never knows, you see, and my life here has become a Thing of Fear.

STUDENTS

You've seen the apple-picker and the hitch-hiker in this spot for the last few weeks. This is positively your last chance to join them in reading the NEW STATESMAN over the summer by taking our

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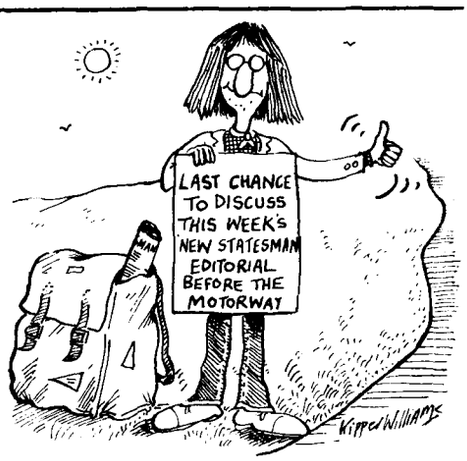

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Letters to the Editor

Labour-Saving

Sir, 'The Case for Holding On'? (NS 24 June). Certainly, but on what terms, and to what ends? The spectacle of a contrite and unimaginative Labour government grovelling before the spokesmen of international capitalism has been repeated often enough for even *Tribuneites* to view it with affectionate if exasperated familiarity. But the sight of a Labour government being pulled around at the end of a short string by a handful of pipsqueak Liberals, and apparently finding the prospect acceptable, is both novel and provoking. The sound of a Labour Chancellor audibly offering 'incentives' to the comparatively well-off, whilst their less fortunate contemporaries are being vigorously coerced into a further period of wage restriction, under whatever name, and senior Liberal politicians lecture us all about a non-existent national interest, is even more a provocation.

Jim Callaghan, and the Government in general, must be made to realise that they need the votes of the *Tribune* group at least as much as those of the Liberals, and if the defeat in the Finance Committee tells them this, it is not entirely wasted as a gesture. Since there are more *Tribuneites* than there are Liberal MPs, it is reasonable that they should wield their bargaining power as vigorously as David Steel wields his. When the Government chooses simultaneously to ditch Bullock and urge direct European elections with PR, it challenges the Left of the PLP to refute their ascribed status as political eunuchs. Who can blame them for rising to the opportunity? Look what sheer cheek, and a modicum of 'nerve' is doing for David Steel. The concessions so far made to the Liberals are hardly an incentive to the kind of self-denial Phillip Whitehead urges, and as James Fenton shrewdly observes elsewhere, it is inherent in the Liberals' position that their demands must continuously increase. To avoid the Labour Party simply falling apart, Mr Callaghan must remember, before it is too late, that the Labour Party is also a coalition.

PETER D. JOHNSTON

8 Kendal Road
Bolton

The Diploma Disease

Sir, Loved Peter Wilby's point (NS 17 June) that too many homely skills are being inflated into 'professions' via spurious courses of study. But hated his conclusion that there's an overall need for less school; and his proposed extensive replacement of formal education by on-the-job training. He is too sweeping and airily out of touch with the facts when he asserts that today's technological complexities *lessen* the need for formal education.

Pressmen and typesetters still learn at trade schools and on the job. But younger printing-industry managers are now very commonly holders of business and technical degrees. And it is my observation that these young graduates need (and industry urgently calls for) as much all-round college as we can give them. The age-22 B.Sc. degree is far from being too much. Their need includes a weight of background in physical and social sciences, mathematics, and computer technology that implies a very well-packed four years of higher education.

As for the proposition of less school in general (except for the gifted few): have we then given up altogether on the democratic notions that (a) the people can vote and pay for as much school as they want, and (b) good general education is a base for the mass political maturity we so crucially need?

EUGENE F. COLEMAN

San Luis Obispo
California
USA

Sir, In his article headed 'The Diploma Disease' Mr Peter Wilby includes the name of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators with other organisations which are all related to the health service and which, he says, are 'traditionally regarded as lower-status occupations'. This is totally inaccurate. The positions occupied by members of this Institute in this country and around the world are not low-status. They include the directors and company secretaries of major international groups of companies in commerce, industry, banking, building societies, insurance etc. There are many members holding senior management positions of high status and responsibility in the nationalised industries, in local government and the public services – including the National Health Service.

Contrary to what Mr Wilby had to say, we try very hard in this Institute to emphasise the practical application of knowledge and we do give exemption from part of our examinations to those who study part-time for national certificates in business studies, for example, while gaining practical experience in business or public administration. We have no intention of becoming an all-graduate profession. Moreover, mature applicants who have had relevant work experience at an appropriate level but who do not offer the full panoply of O and A level passes are allowed into the profession.

B. BARKER
Secretary and Chief Executive
The Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators
16 Park Crescent
London W1

Arms and the Man

Sir, James Cameron may be a political realist – but he is a very pessimistic political realist. Concluding his review of Anthony Sampson's *The Arms Bazaar* (NS 24 June), he asks if Western economies must depend for their prosperity (*sic*) on selling arms, and if we can ever learn how much we are a part of this corrupt and cynical market. His answer is 'yes, we shall sell arms, and no, we shall not be told – unless this valuable book stirs something up, which I doubt'.

The same was said of the slave trade: that it was part of the world order, and that there was nothing individuals could do about it. *The Arms Bazaar* is an excellent exposé of the international arms trade. Much more information about the weapons Britain produces and sells, the countries which buy them, the uses to which they are put – *and what individuals in this country can do and are doing to end British involvement in the arms trade* – is available from the Campaign Against Arms Trade, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1, tel. 01-278 1976. Anthony Sampson's book *can* be the catalyst for stirring something up, if we do not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by pessimism before we even try.

SANDY MERRITT

Campaign Against Arms Trade
5 Caledonian Road
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About Oxford books

Eliot and Pound

'In the summer of 1913 Pound had heard from Aiken that, as he put it, "there was a guy at Harvard doing funny stuff." Eliot then invited Pound's attention by calling on him in September 1914. He showed Pound "Prufrock" and Pound was immediately captivated by Eliot's natural language and his uncanny grasp of "an extant milieu and an extant state of comprehension." . . . Eliot was stimulated and encouraged by Pound's enthusiasm. Pound energized Eliot at a time when he was more or less resigned to an academic career in philosophy and turned him firmly back to a career as a poet. They were drawn together as two young lapsed professors in exile from America. Eliot looked up to his older and better known contemporary as a teacher and campaigner, and was grateful for his truly generous attention and concern. "He woud cajole, and almost coerce, other men into writing well," Eliot remembered, "so that he often presents the appearance of a man trying to convey to a very deaf person the fact that the house is on fire." Pound gave Eliot entrée to his first artistic milieu in London, the group which included Miss Weaver, Wyndham Lewis, H.D., and Aldington. From mid-1915 Eliot attended their Thursday night gatherings in Soho and Regent Street restaurants where – tall, lean, and hollow-cheeked – he would listen to gossip of Amy Lowell's amazing descent on London, and Ford Madox Hueffer booming anecdotes of the great Victorians, and Arthur Waley on Chinese poetry, while overhead the air-raid sirens whined.' From **Eliot's Early Years**, by Lyndall Gordon, £4.95

Trollope the maker

'Is Trollope the last of the old-fashioned novelists, working subtly within safe conventions and allowing to his readers a full indulgence in the nostalgic pleasures of recognition, or is he the first of the practitioners of "open form," anticipating the freest experiments in fiction and holding a moral outlook so advanced it is best understood as "situation ethics?" Trollope loved to compare himself to a shoemaker, and he was, in his way, closer to the truth than those who, like Henry James, attacked him for violating the rules of dramatic illusion, of art as "history." Trollope was a maker, not an historian. **The Novels of Anthony Trollope**, by James R. Kincaid, £9.75, works out through analyses of his major novels some of the implications of his brilliant and subtle exploitation of that position.

Marxist Introductions

Marxist Introductions is a new series, edited by Raymond Williams and Steven Lukes, the volumes in which will discuss the relevance of Marxism to a variety of intellectual disciplines. Each will provide the basic equipment for developing a Marxist theory of that discipline, and also make an original contribution to it; the first two to be published are **Marxism and Politics** by Ralph Miliband, and **Marxism and Literature** by Raymond Williams, £3.50 each.

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The Case of George Ince

Sir, The London Diary (NS 24 June) piece about my fiancé George Ince typifies the factual inaccuracies and attitude of much of the press reporting of George. To mention George in the same breath as a notorious poisoner and the Moors murderer does a grave injustice to George and all those fighting to release him.

First, George is not a Category A prisoner, and consequently not escorted everywhere by a prison warder, as those members of the media who have visited him will confirm. One wonders where Miss Adam obtained her information, no doubt from the same source which says he is doing fine. That same source said he was doing fine, when in Gartree Prison he was suffering the most appalling deterioration, both mentally and physically in his health. It is true that George was moved to Gartree 'after an alleged escape', but it is also true that the Home Office apologised for the allegation – it had all been a mistake!

Perhaps Miss Adam can explain how a man within a prison hospital wing can be heavily drugged and placed in solitary confinement, contract pneumonia, pleurisy and thrombosis, and finally be moved to the Leicester Royal Infirmary? This was all reluctantly confirmed by the Home Office following the reporting of the case in *The Times* (18 February 1977). Following the issue of writs against the Home Office alleging negligent medical treatment an independent consultant psychiatrist was allowed to examine George on 12 May. The concluding sentences from the Medical Report of Dr Anthony Whitehead will suffice:

> Following this mistaken accusation (the alleged escape) he became disturbed. This would appear to be due to his treatment in Gartree Prison. Since I was not able to see his medical notes from Gartree I am not able to fully assess the situation, but clearly what happened there had a profound damaging effect upon Mr Ince . . . In my opinion this deterioration will continue and possibly accelerate, and if he has to complete a further substantial period of imprisonment I consider that there is a serious danger that his mental health will be irreparably damaged.

Is it any wonder he is terrified of returning to Gartree?

It was kind of Miss Adam to suggest alternative prisons where 'under the closest possible supervision' George might be accommodated, but for those people like myself who believe in George's innocence, the only move possible is the one which gives him his freedom. Given the space and a further opportunity though, I should like to make a few suggestions of where Miss Adam can go.

DOLLY GREY

40 Thornfield House
Rosefield Gardens
London E14

CORINNA ADAM writes: I am sorry that Mrs Grey has so misunderstood my paragraph, which deliberately accused the authorities of a pitiless attitude towards George Ince.

Scottish Colonials

Sir, Not being a devotee of the metropolitan press, I came upon the NS for 17 June only yesterday. Could I comment on two contributions about Scotland: James Fenton's review of Tom Nairn's *Break-up of Britain*, and John Mackay's letter on BBC Scotland?

Mr Mackay has learnt his lessons so well that he can now spontaneously spout the white man's arguments. His identification of 'Scots of good sense and objectivity' with those who, like himself in his final paragraph, appeal ultimately – and pathetically – to the wisdom of metropolitan judgment, illustrates perfectly the mentality of the good native. Not that he is wrong to deplore the absurdities of BBC Scotland. But then, is he unaware of the theory, familiar since Farnon, that distortions occur within the cultures of colonised nations? 'There comes about a veritable emaciation of the stock of national culture. It becomes a set of automatic habits, some traditions of dress and a few broken-down institutions.' Where Mr Mackay is wrong, massively so, is in his assumption that Scotland must choose between tartanry and submission to the forms and values of Oxbridge and Hampstead.

Mr Fenton is the white liberal bemused by the perverseness of the natives' attempt to discover an identity. Why do they bother with such nonsense when internationalism is the thing? Mr Fenton denigrates the colonised culture, then derides the idea that there is such a thing as Scottishness ('Where is true Scottishness to be found?'). These classic imperialist manoeuvres were also described many years ago by Frantz Fanon: 'Every effort is made to bring the colonised person to admit the inferiority of his culture . . . to recognise the unreality of his "nation" . . .' Now that the economic arguments against Scottish independence have been rendered obsolete, we shall doubtless hear more 'cultural objections' of the kind Mr Fenton has treated us to.

Mr Fenton's professed 'internationalism' is a sham, for internationalism involves essentially a respect for cultures other than one's own. That, he has yet to acquire.

RONNIE TURNBULL

55 South Clerk Street
Edinburgh

I'm a Believer

Sir, I was most interested in Corinna Adam's proposal (London Diary 24 June) that the future offspring of the Prince of Wales should be brought up without any religion at all. This is àpropos the notion that they might otherwise be brought up Protestant and Catholic, according to sex, if their mother happens to be a Catholic. Denouncing this, she writes: 'I prefer the Jubilee Year suggestion made in this office – that we should celebrate by repealing the 1701 Act of Settlement, and bring the royal children up as atheists.'

The trouble is: just how would 'we' ensure that they *were* brought up as genuine atheists? The religious education of princes and princesses has always been a keenly debated subject in times of political strife: on the eve of the Civil War, for example, Parliamentarians feared that Queen Henrietta Maria might bring up her son, the future Charles II, as a Catholic, and were determined that he should emerge a proper Protestant. But the imposition of atheism strikes me as even more difficult than the imposition of belief. Individuals sometimes show the most regrettable tendencies to believe in God, particularly when they have been forbidden to do so. What method has Corinna Adam in mind for keeping the Royal infants suitably God-free? There might have to be some new kind of National Board set up to examine them regularly and keenly, to make sure that nothing had crept in to sully their non-belief. I am assuming of course that 'we' consists of the British people as a whole – it is not quite clear from the context who is to be involved.

If in fact the whole task is to be shouldered by the NEW STATESMAN office itself, then I suppose they can use their existing Board. In which case I do hope for the sake of the magazine's future, that Prince Charles is not blessed with a very large family, as such work could be time-consuming.

ANTONIA FRASER

33 Launceston Place
London W8

The Cost of the Moon Cult

Sir, Your article on Sun Myung Moon's political and commercial empire (NS 24 June) is a welcome breakthrough as against the many 'human interest' stories exposing the cult angle. Having spent about six hours every day for the last two years replying to distraught parents, pressing an uncomprehending Home Office for a public inquiry and building up a nationwide organisation, Family Action Information and Rescue (FAIR), I appreciate the reference 'MPs like Paul Rose have been resisting their advance'. More apposite are the words which precede this: 'The Moonies certainly have got a lot of money to spend if they want to try and get a stronger foothold here.'

One method of spending money is to issue libel writs and effectively silence voices of experts and critics. The law of libel is such that any individual faced with the prospect of fighting a multi-million dollar conglomerate is in a pretty unpleasant position irrespective of the rights and wrongs.

For that reason FAIR is hamstrung by the fact that I am currently in the second year of a legal battle with this organisation which only voluntary help and donations of those opposed to the expansion of this empire have allowed me to sustain. Similarly, FAIR has worked on a shoestring to build up a national organisation and seven provincial branches and has been able to expose the truth about Moon through meetings, pamphlets, press and Parliament. It also has an NBC film to be shown to invited audiences which is frankly almost unbelievable to those unfamiliar with the methods of this political, millionaire Messiah.

It has been a lonely and difficult battle inside and outside Parliament and an even greater ordeal facing their financial power in the courts. We can eclipse Moon even if the Home Office and the Charity Commissioner have so far failed to take any significant action. But we need help. Donations made out please to FAIR, c/o Arthur Stone, Treasurer, 9 Highfield Close, London NW9.

PAUL B. ROSE

House of Commons

Thwack!

Sir, So, it's 'thwokk', is it?

What a pity it is for Mick Shepherd (University Forum 17 June) that he was unable to find a better acoustic whizz-word than this in his dictionary of fifth-rate sociologese clichés. If he is going to write this sort of thing properly, he really must work at getting his grammar (what there is of it) yet more flatulent, and polish up his ponderous efforts to be rhetorical. Better still, why doesn't he scrap the whole thing and sit down to read some real sociology? The only trouble with that, of course, is that it is written in English.

Until then, my advice to Mick Shepherd, in language he will understand, is: Keep your thwokking to yourself, man.

JEREMY PRITLOVE

4 Gamel View
Steeton, Keighley

New Statesman Veterans

Sir, I am making a documentary profile about the NEW STATESMAN for BBC Television and would like to hear from any long-term individual subscribers or readers (i.e. since the Thirties at least), giving brief details of what the magazine has meant to them. Please write to me (giving a daytime telephone number if possible) at BBC Television Centre, Wood Lane, London W12 7RJ.

SANDRA GREGORY

BBC Television Centre
Wood Lane
London W12

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Russell Davies

The Characters of Love

Man & Woman: A Study of Love and the Novel 1740-1940 by A. O. J. COCKSHUT
Collins £4.50

It would be folly, I hope you agree, to start off a discussion of love by defining it. One can love only as coherently as one feels; one seldom feels the same two days running, if one is properly alive; and besides, lust (without which love becomes brotherly and biblical) is a great fuzzifier of impressions. One ought perhaps to be able to 'be honest with oneself' about love; but this, though it sounds so much like a moral duty, is in my experience much more like a talent. It is to the talent, if one has it, that one owes the duty.

Such moral relativities may not be much use to the lover, yet they are of supreme interest to the novelist, who not only observes them constantly shifting and changing in the society around him but is himself intimately subject to their change. This last is the complicating factor. Not all writers realise how fashion-led and challengeable their assumptions are; others realise it perfectly well, and go on assuming regardless. Others again make much of their ability to juggle with degrees and conditions of innocence and cynicism, and make plain their own preferences (not necessarily deeply or sincerely treasured ones) through satire. It takes a great critic to sense whence the moral pressure comes – from the author, from the age, from both in unison, from the character uniquely, and so on – and most especially so where the natural affections are concerned. Love is not a reliable barometer; it jumps up and down too much on its own account.

Mr A. O. J. Cockshut, in any case, is not the barometric type. He is more the grandfather clock. He stands four-square on the floor and counts the years; he smiles stolidly down on marital virtue. At least – he puts on a neutral face, claiming not to know 'how my beliefs and attitudes are apparent in what follows'. But I think he must know really, or he would not have followed this disclaimer with a statement of his position, which is: 'I have been a convinced Catholic for over 30 years and a happily-married man for nearly 25.' In an age when it is only polite to make a show of uncertainty, this is defiance indeed: measurable evidence of loyalty to embattled modes of thought. I cannot think of many modern critics who would deliberately make this information known. (Possibly there are few who could honestly do so.) True, Mr Cockshut goes out of his way, once or twice later on, to complicate the reader's idea of him, but his efforts are misdirected. I am thinking in particular of his attempt to be bluff and new-broomish and come-come about homosexuality ('There was a general delusion among the respectable that male homosexuals invariably practised anal intercourse'), which is notably ill-emphasised by a footnote that merely repeats the assertion with a nudge and a wink:

> Barrack-room obscenities in the British Army, spoken mainly by normal and innocent boys who wish to appear knowing, turn – or used to turn – mainly on ingenious variants of this rather uncommon practice.

This, I submit, would not have been written by someone who did not still carry within him active remnants of just such a 'normal and innocent' soul.

Mr Cockshut's enterprise tends to shrink as you approach it. To begin with, he acts here not as a critic but as a literary historian. He is concerned less with how the literature of the past speaks now than with how it spoke at the time. How well it spoke, moreover, bothers him comparatively little. 'I have been more concerned to record what novelists actually thought and felt than to evaluate it.' Already we envisage something less imposing than the promised 'Study of Love and the Novel' over two centuries. What we have, in fact, is a patchy chronological survey of novelists' struggles with convention, their variable reticence in matters that affect the two sexes together. Now Mr Cockshut, early on, has a very good point to make about reticence, but he makes it in passing and it is never satisfactorily developed: 'reticence', he remarks, ' . . . is so undeniably necessary to civilised life, *since without it*' (my emphases) 'the whole idea of what is fitting to an occasion is lost.'

I don't think this is a cast-iron truism, but it is certainly very interesting. It represents the extremely English concept, widespread throughout our society, though most Europeans would call it aristocratically conservative, of appropriateness as an ideal in itself – the notion that situations impose their own moral order, and that to respect this, and to pattern one's behaviour accordingly, is to make one's optimum contribution to the health of civilisation. By this creed, there is a decorum beyond decorum, beyond convention; its demands are unspoken, and its essence is tact. There is a Great Tradition to be strung out along this line (whose chief props would be Jane Austen and Henry James), but not here. The idea of reticence as the servant of fine-feeling remains in some dulled, intuitable way the theme of the book, but it does not rise again to do battle with Lawrence at the end of the trail.

As it is, Cockshut makes things hard for himself. He eliminates love 'as traditionally conceived by poets . . . private, intimate, intense, even ecstatic' too hastily from his inquiries (which cramps him fearfully when he gets to Emily Brontë), and, true to the spirit of his preliminary announcement, he disdains to make useful distinctions between love and marriage, except in so far as they apply to primitive works where marriage is a conventionalised rainbow's-end that draws the plot forward. This approach involves him before long in an extraordinarily bufferish defence of the institution of marriage, based, if one can say so much, on Fielding's *Amelia*. 'A visitor from Mars,' he exclaims, 'after reading many novels, could be pardoned for supposing that love and sexual passion, and even sexual intercourse, were facets of human life entirely separate from marriage.' Not so, gentle Martian reader:

> Put bluntly, the question Fielding asks his readers is this: If it is delightful to have a beautiful, loving, loyal and responsive woman in bed with you, why should it be any less delightful because she is wearing your ring? And he answers his own question by saying, 'Not less delightful but much more!' Unanswerably true [!], and yet . . . shoals of novels, French and English, had been written on the opposite assumption.

Well of course they had. They still are, for the very good reason that there is a perpetual market for them among people who like to take their minds off the strains of fidelity by reading of the many other beautiful, responsive etc. women in the world. The fact that Amelia has what Mrs Whitehouse would call a lively sex-life within marriage, incidentally, is described by Cockshut as 'wholly natural in life but surprising in a novel'. In this novel, it should be remembered, Amelia's husband William Booth meets a Miss Matthews (in prison, actually) and his infidelity with her is later pardoned in most saintly fashion by the monstrously long-suffering Amelia. Is the price she pays for her jolly bedtimes also part of Mr Cockshut's sense of what is 'wholly natural in life'?

It is hard to get over a passage like this in Cockshut's book and settle down again to the business of tracing the course of true love through the 19th century; harder still when the authors begin to arrive in clumps, under worrying headings. Why are Thackeray and Mrs Gaskell yoked together as 'The Realists'? Was Thackeray ever a realist at all, seeing that he habitually refused, as John Bayley has pointed out in a grander book than this (*The Characters of Love*), to take his characters seriously? It is no less strange to find Emily Brontë and Swinburne bracketed together as 'Pessimists'. Is there any useful sense in which they can be said to be complementary figures, after one has noted that Swinburne once wrote sympathetically of Emily in an essay 'not specific enough to tell us how he interpreted *Wuthering Heights*'? It so happens that Cockshut is interesting (because attracted despite himself) on the subject of Swinburne's noveloid atrocities, just as later he will be far more lively on Havelock Ellis than on Lawrence (who are 'Optimists', of violently opposed temperaments). But by this stage in the book, the business of accounting for sexual tastes is occupying most of Mr Cockshut's attention. His closing chapters on homosexual literature

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constitute a display of careful tolerance rather than new readings, though Forster's *Maurice* is treated with strenuous magnanimity as 'the only major English novel in which the subject is central'. The subject of love, in this necessarily marriageless portion of the book, disappears almost completely. There is every sign that Mr. Cockshut agrees with that mischievous remark of Edmund Wilson's, 'homosexuality is, in every sense, a cul-de-sac'.

Thankful not to have taxed the mind in advance over infinitely mutable definitions of love, one closes this book with the realisation that its theme has not been the experience of love at all, but the extent to which authors have succeeded in being sexually frank without rocking the boat, i.e. without endangering the orderly swap of moral sustenance that is marriage. If Mr Cockshut is on the side of frankness, it is because frankness will save us from Victorian confusions (hardly the worst we now suffer from, I think) between God and Mammon. He himself deals in frankly moralistic fashion with the Victorians, who let us down. They failed 'to guide their public to ask themselves what marriage was and why they valued it'. Thackeray and Trollope dropped hints; 'but both', laments Cockshut, 'were more interested in their own masterly psychology and their own comic brilliance than in these skeletons in the national cupboard.' So am I; and so are most people who look to literature for inspiration and commentary rather than precept.

Ted Hughes

GAUDETE

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"No one could fail to react to the sharp observation, the springy, surprising, often playful language, the feeling for natural forces of destruction and renewal."
—Edwin Morgan, Times Literary Supplement. £2.40

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Paul Addison

The Burden of Proof

Hitler's War by DAVID IRVING *Hodder £9.95*

David Irving's book has achieved notoriety because of its claim that the extermination of the Jews was concealed from Hitler until late in the war, and carried out by Himmler against the express orders of the Führer. Both Irving and his publishers doubtless believe that his book provides a radically new interpretation of Hitler, and the one infallible way to put across this message is to place a strong emphasis, as Irving does in his introduction, on the alleged revision of the origins of the 'final solution'. This is an issue which naturally arouses anger, and the fear of a revived cult of Hitler; but it is also liable to distract attention from the fact that Irving has otherwise no new insight of major significance on Hitler in the remaining 810 pages of his 823. Irving's book is certainly an attempt to revise history – but in a more indirect and ultimately more disturbing way.

For most people in this country it has long been an article of faith that the war against Hitler was at the deepest level both inevitable and just. There has been a certain myopia about the skeletons in the Allied cupboard. But David Irving long ago realised that there were skeletons to be found. He seemed to feel that it was his mission to uncover the cover-ups, detecting the conspiracies and the doctored records. Irving's strength lay in the zeal with which he sought to discover forgotten documents and witnesses. But like all dedicated conspiracy theorists, he was committed to finding a conspiracy whether or not one had existed. Thus he showed convincingly that the allies had not only employed terror-bombing against the civilian population of Dresden, but that the facts were carefully concealed from the British public at the time. On the other hand, his belief that Churchill had ordered the assassination of his ally General Sikorski was worked up from the flimsiest evidence and was wildly improbable anyway. Irving's latest book confirms that while he is usually a Colossus of research, he is often a schoolboy in judgment.

Irving certainly believes that he is revising the stock portrait of Hitler. To discover the 'real Hitler' he has conducted a stunning programme of research, sweeping aside the printed sources as suspect, and going wherever possible to the original documents of the Third Reich. He has discovered diaries, papers and witnesses which previous historians neglected. With some awe we may picture him prowling through a forest in East Germany, equipped with a proton-magnetometer, in search of a buried glass jar 'containing stenograms of Goebels's very last diaries' – though he did not find them. Irving stitches together his sources into a narrative which portrays Hitler throughout the war in greater close-up than ever before.

In the end, however, all his research succeeds only in reproducing the same old Hitler we have learnt about from other historians: an unfathomably crude and vicious racialist, warmonger, and pathological anti-Semite, convinced that Roosevelt and Churchill were the puppets of international Jewry, rambling on eternally about *Lebensraum*, ordering his generals to stand fast against impossible odds, devoid of the love or appreciation of other human beings, incapable of a perceptive comment about anyone else, intelligent only about machines. In the first pages of Irving's book we see Hitler ordering a secret programme of mass murder of mental patients, and he marches on from one atrocity to the next.

While recording all this in vivid detail, Irving retains in his mind one small watertight compartment of breathtaking naïveté. He is obviously surprised that Hitler ever did anything which could be regarded as human or honourable. That Hitler had a favourite dog, had coffee with his secretaries, objected to the hunting of animals – my oh my, could this be the mad dictator that Irving learned about in school? He claims that whereas the Allied leaders condoned political assassination, Hitler expressly forbade it. Suppose this were true. Are we to believe for one second that Hitler's motive was a sense of honour? And had he not assassinated many of his oldest street-fighting comrades in the Night of the Long Knives? Irving proposes more significant revisions, urging for example that Hitler has been unjustly blamed for the fate of the Sixth Army at Stalingrad. Yet his account of the episode brings out Hitler's wooden-headed stupidity on this occasion. Irving at least has the virtue of printing the sources which undermine his own conclusions.

His contention that Hitler was innocent of the decision to exterminate the Jews is a different matter, depending as it does upon the absence of evidence which directly implicates Hitler. But evidence which is not there can prove nothing either way. The most credible explanation is surely that this was a real cover-up of which the hapless Irving is himself the victim. Hitler knew that genocide was the greatest of all crimes and took care to instruct Himmler verbally in their many secret conferences alone together. While Irving is prone to the occasional black-out of judgment about Hitler, the documents are too strong for him: a radical revision is impossible, and even on Irving's own interpretation Hitler was, he agrees, primarily responsible for the destruction of the Jews.

But – and this is the crucial point – Irving also uses the German documents as sources on the motives and intentions of the British, the Russians and the Americans. By no stretch of the imagination can they be regarded as reliable in this respect. For example, when Hitler was attacking some innocent prey, political intelligence reports would always seek to depict the victim as the aggressor, for this was what the Emperor of Paranoia wished to hear. Thus we are treated to the old tale that Hitler was responding to allied provocations, or

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taking pre-emptive action. In April 1940 he is seen as thwarting a British plan to occupy Norway; in June 1941 his assault on the Soviet Union anticipates a Stalinist war of expansion. One story will illustrate a theme which Irving works particularly hard, the Churchillian conspiracy to keep the British from realising Hitler's good intentions. In 1942 German interrogators got to work on a captured British officer. According to their report, this officer was amazed to learn that Germany had no designs on the British Empire, and believed that if only this were known the war would end. Irving comments: 'The British authorities continued, however, to represent Hitler's war aims to the British people very differently.' Again, this is the wrong end of the stick. The British fought because of the fear and repulsion which Hitler's own actions had engendered over many years.

The thesis which all of Irving's work seems to be leading up to is this: Hitler was guilty, but he was no more guilty than the Allies. It is hinted that the extermination of the Jews was only part of a new climate of barbarism created partly by such British initiatives as strategic bombing and the assassination of Heydrich. Beliefs of this kind spring from a profound failure to discriminate between the different shades of human culpability, a failure which is itself usually associated with political extremism. Irving's book edges towards the contention that Churchill was as wicked as Hitler: and if you believe that, you are in trouble.

Eric Korn

Drive, He Said

Perpetual Motion: The History of an Obsession by ARTHUR W. J. G. ORD-HUME *Allen & Unwin* £5.50

'A boon to the motor-cyclist' was how they described it. You just sat – heavily, if possible – in the saddle, and buttock-pressure forced down a piston, which drove water through ingenious nozzles on to a turbine, which turned a belt, which caused the wheels to go round, which operated a pump, which carried the water back up again. This qualifies as a perpetual-motion machine, with the consequent drawback that it doesn't work.

There are many such devices described and illustrated in this entertaining, stimulating and rather unsatisfying book, and mostly they have the devious charm of moustache-cups and electric footwarmers, which is odd: for surely man in conflict with inexorable laws of nature has the dimensions of tragedy, not farce. The appeal of something-for-nothing needs no explanation: the pertinacity of the seekers does. For most people, having an intuitive pessimism about the world, don't expect these devices to work. Only the child or the incurably criminal, seeing all that energy floating about the universe, think that some of it

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can be diverted into their pockets without consequence. 'If everyone in the world gave me a halfpenny, I'd be rich and they wouldn't notice the difference.' Or again, the schoolboy belief in a magical frontier where the Freedonian dollar can be bought for 90 cents in the currency of Cockaigne, while one dollar (Cockaigne) costs 90 cents (Freedonian). And yet Arkwright, Bernoulli and Stephenson were among the wild-goose hunters.

Perpetual motion lies about us in our infancy: the sun, and planets (or the earth), wheel tirelessly; the winds and tides return, molecules in solution bob indefatigably, plants and animals die and are reborn, growing out of nothing. The hunter, the fisherman, the pastoralist and the tiller all expect, if the gods are kind, to get something for nothing. This is called increase and is virtuous; when the city-dweller tries it, it is usury. It needs a sophisticated thermodynamics to make out the balance-sheet of biological growth or atmospheric circulation; but long before this there seems to have been a sense that the world did not work that way, and that it was not merely illogical but immoral to expect anything else. It would be tempting to relate the rise of a Renaissance physics largely based on the axiom that perpetual motion – or better, perpetual action – cannot be (and simultaneous wistful attempts to circumvent this) to concomitant economic and theological developments.

There are two very different casts of mind here: one sees machinery as akin to magical manipulation, calling up the incomprehensible and endless forces of the universe; to the other the machine is but a special artificial example of the cosmic clockwork. To the first, the orrery mimics the effortless movement of the spheres, so why should not ingenuity trap and exploit some portion of the *primum mobile*? A mill-wheel runs for ever, as long as the water flows; an Archimedean screw lifts water against gravity; then let the wheel power the screw, and the screw supply the wheel. One of the earliest projects, that of one Marcantonio Zimara, published in 1518, uses a windmill to work a bellows which puffs optimistically against the sails; because wind is an invisible and inexplicable force it lends itself to such airy hopes. Quite opposite is the attitude that shuns mysteries, and like Galileo builds its theories on the axiomatic impossibility of perpetual action. Simon Stevin, in the late 16th century, proved a theorem concerning equilibrium on inclined planes by imagining a necklace of spheres around the plane; if the equilibrium did not hold, they would move endlessly and this could not be. In thought, he removed successive spheres to produce a situation of diagrammatic simplicity: contrast with this the effort of the perpetually hopeful, who make their mechanisms ever more complex in the fond belief that nature can be conned. No one expects a wheel with a single weight attached to turn forever; but let there be multiple weights, hollow balls full of mercury, turning in spiral grooves or on the end of sprung arms, and perhaps you may be lucky.

Few designs were as ingenuous as the 'well-greased rope' passing through a water-filled tube and then over a pulley; buoyancy would make the rope rise and gravity pull it down again. Usually wheels run within wheels, sponges employ capillary action, and perhaps magnets play their part too: in the resulting kinematic fog, God's pockets can be picked. The projectors combine precision and vagueness in an endearing way; 'the self-acting atmospheric engine will effect a saving of considerably over £120,000,000 per annum in the United Kingdom', but technical details are sparse; Gamgee's ammonia zeromotor, which had the distinction of contravening the Second as well as the First Law of Thermodynamics, would be particularly valuable to the US Navy in time of war.

The reiteration of folly, no matter how charming, becomes fatiguing after a while, especially as Mr Ord-Hume's narrative tends to a sort of tumid jollity, padded with marginal irrelevancies like Cox's perpetual clock (which is merely a self-winding mechanism with barometric pressure as an external energy source), or the everlasting lamp (a myth rather than a fallacy) and occasional descents into loopiness – for instance, his description of the bobbing duck toy as 'the most controversial thing of these immediate post-war years', or his explanation of the attention accorded to Mr Garabed Giragossian's free-energy motor on the grounds that 'America is a mongrel country'.

More uplifting to the soul are the deliberate frauds. John W. Keely lived well for many years on the contributions for his proposed 'hydro-pneumatic-pulsating-vacu-engine': demonstrations were possible in his well-prepared laboratory, which was found after his death to have, concealed beneath false floors and walls, elaborate drive shafts, compressed air lines, vast magnets, and a spring so enormous that once wound it would run for several days. Less lucky was Charles Redheffer of Pennsylvania, when a keen-eyed investigator saw that the teeth of his cog-wheels were worn on the wrong edge, showing that what purported to drive was actually being driven. The investigator made a similar model that performed the same way, and Redheffer panicked, like a phoney medium who sees a real ghost. He moved to New York with a new model, which attracted the attention of Fulton, the steamboat pioneer. During a demonstration, Fulton tore away the frame supporting the machine and revealed a drive belt, which he traced to a distant room where a long-bearded ancient man sat on a stool, gnawing a crust of bread and wearily turning a handle. 'He displayed all the signs', says Ord-Hume, 'of having been imprisoned in the room for a long, long time.'

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John Sturrock

Epicycle

The Great Bike Race by GEOFFREY NICHOLSON *Hodder* £4.25

It was really the bibulous, bicycle-loving French humorist Alfred Jarry who invented the Tour de France. In 1902 he published a vaguely indecent little tale called *The Supermale* – its first sentence isn't relevant but it is eye-catching: 'The act of love is of no importance, since it can be performed indefinitely' – in which there is a prodigious race over 10,000 miles between five men on one futuristic bicycle and an express train. Jarry was no progressive: the men just pip the machine. One year after that, in 1903, the Tour de France was started, over the shorter but still ludicrous distance of 2,500 kilometres. It was divided into only six stages, so that the toiling, stuffily-clad champions of the day had to pedal for up to 18 hours at a go and set off on the next stage in the middle of the night.

The Supermale certainly got the future right. Jarry's race is an advertising stunt, laid on so as to prove the worth to every athlete, sexual or otherwise, of a miraculous Perpetual Motion Food (dehydrated absinthe chopped into cubes, if I'm not mistaken); and the real Tour de France has turned over the years into the most comprehensively sponsored event in any sport anywhere, with firms, organisations and provincial towns scrambling to put their names to some part of it, however ignominious. The Tour's budget, according to Geoffrey Nicholson's figures, is now getting on for a million pounds. It is all very theatrical, very mercenary and very loud, as it parades ritualistically around the sticks before coming home, three weeks later,

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to where the funds originate, in Paris.

The Great Bike Race tells you everything; it makes an alembicated, rather foreign event perfectly intelligible. Basically, the book is the story of the 1976 Tour, won, as so many Tours have been lately, not by a Frenchman but by a Belgian. In between the successive stages of the race, rather like the rest-days which the contestants get, come chapters of history, gossip and explanation. Perhaps the race itself suffers from the arrangement, yet it does make better and better sense as Nicholson's commentary accumulates in its slipstream. He is extremely lucid on the riders' tactics. To a simple-minded pedestrian like myself these are unusually obscure, since the fastest riders seem to spend so much of their time unambitiously sheltering in the middle of the field, eyes fixed on each other, while the nobodies – the Tour is feudal enough actually to call them *domestiques* – do the perspiring at the front.

And while we are on the bodily fluids, what, you may well ask yourself, do these necessarily sedentary sportsmen do when they need to pee? To stop and go behind a tree would be to throw away the race. Geoffrey Nicholson clears this minor but intriguing puzzle up too: they wait for a quiet bit of road and then relieve themselves as decently as they can. An untimely or over-ostentatious leak can bring a fine from the organisers; so why doesn't some tidy-minded plastics firm market the Eddy Merckx autograph drip-bag to help the incontinent?

The one thing which *The Great Bike Race* doesn't quite explain is the strange hold the Tour de France has over the French. They aren't greatly given to practising sports, nor even to watching them, but they do love the Tour. So can it be that the Tour de France isn't a sporting event at all? Can any bicycle race that goes on for a full three weeks and ends (with luck) on Bastille Day be thought of as a *sporting* event? The Tour is horribly gruelling and occasionally exciting, but its addicts take a generally cerebral pleasure in its complications rather than a simple one in the eventual result. It is, as Roland Barthes once argued very brilliantly, an epic.

Epic too, is the language in which it is written about in France. Here Geoffrey Nicholson, addict though he be, breaks absolutely with the natives: where they wallow compulsively in the abstract and rhapsodic, he is defiantly prosaic. His book is admirably lively but it doesn't try to match the occasion. He was probably wise, though, to eschew anything fancy, because rhetoric easily misfires if your typesetters won't cooperate: when he does go so far as to quote a French journalist's heightened description of a particularly hard day's biking, one distressed rider's 'calvary' comes out tamely here as his 'cavalry'.

Peter Conrad

You Dig?

Fan-Mail by CLIVE JAMES *Faber* £1.95

Clive James needs a subject he despises. As a rhetorician, he is best in flyting. Television suits him, because he resents every hour of enforced domesticity he spends watching it, and can revenge himself in febrile denunciation. Yet part of this rage against television derives from frustration at being exiled on the wrong side of the screen. He is a natural performer sentenced to membership of the audience, and the frenzied patter of his column is not commentary but re-enactment, a brilliant imitation of what television is like, not a criticism of it. He is an outsider who wants to belong, but has to content himself with the yearning revenge of mimicry. Despite the slangy mockery, he is a sentimentalist, and the verse-letters of *Fan-Mail* are moist-eyed homilies in praise of James's friends and of art. This sentimental susceptibility humanises the coruscating ranter, but it damages him as a critic and as a poet.

Beneath the protection of an uneasy jocularity, *Fan-Mail* is the account of a sentimental education, an induction into the

Craig Raine

The Grocer

'the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation'
– James Joyce to Lady Gregory.

The grocer's hair is parted like a feather
by two swift brushes and a dab
of brilliantine.

His cheesewire is a sun dial selling by
the hour.
He brings it down at four and five o'clock,

the wooden T gripped like a corkscrew.
Greaseproof squares curl in diamonds on
a hook.

He takes, and orientates the chock
of cheese,
swoops his hand away, leaves it on the
choppy scales.

Tortoise-necked, he reads the price aloud
and fingers do their automatic origami.

He shakes the air into a paper bag and,
eggs pickpocketed inside, trapezes it.

Coins are raked with trident hand,
trickled into the till – palm out,

with thumb crooked over the stigma,
he smiles like a modest quattrocento Christ.

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civilised values of Europe to which James devotes himself in the poem about his early years in Florence with his wife, which he avuncularly recommends to Martin Amis, and to which he recalls an errant Peter Porter. James's didactic generosity and his reverence for art are touching qualities, and yet they are death to his poetic ingenuity and his critical intelligence. He seems to be incapable of writing well about something he admires – or rather, admiration so incapacitates him that lines of veneration twist into the suspicion of parody, as when he describes his first encounter with Dante:

> For sheer intensity of lyric form
> I'd never read that stretch of verse's peer.

Because his native critical manner is such a brazen and impudent mimicry of its object, the reflex of a determination to insert himself into the act, his reaction when an object of genuine aesthetic worth presents itself is to behave with an exemplary unnaturalness and adopt a posture of fawning submission. The intelligence is disconnected, and the duty of critical response transferred to the taste-buds and tear-ducts.

In a recent *Observer* piece about a Russian jaunt, James was so disarmed by enthusiasm for the pictures in the Hermitage that his style, usually kept taut by the rhetoric of repudiation, teetered into the sort of shrill fatuity which he denounces with such brilliant hilarity when it comes from BBC announcers:

> A wall of Bonnards, a room full of Cézannes, another room full of Rose, Blue and early Cubist Picassos – it's unbelievable. (The equivalent rooms in Moscow's Pushkin Museum are unbelievable too.)

The soft heart writes with a limp wrist.

This over-awed aesthetic sentimentality is perhaps the style of the passionate Australian pilgrim, the outsider who arms himself against social exclusion by professing satiric contempt, but crumples into vulnerability when confronted by what he sees as the miracle of art. James shares this weakness with Barry Humphries: unmanned by doting fondness for his subject, Humphries in his television film about the Dieppe painters turned audibly into Dame Edna Everage, tripping down the cobbled alleys in a delirium of aesthetic awe. In the letter to Peter Porter, James describes England as the pit of experience into which the colonial innocent improvingly falls. A rehearsal for that fall occurs in the letter to Russell Davies, when James lunges spectacularly through the air in a Kung-Fu brawl staged for a Barry McKenzie film. On this occasion he survives the fall of two feet six inches. Maybe that's the problem: his innocence is too resilient, and won't be debauched; he stubbornly retains the gaping, trusting wonder of the new arrival, and watching television only fortifies his purity, intensifying his respect for what he imagines to be high art.

For James even parody is a sort of qualifying exam: he mocks society, in his gossipy epics, because that allows him to convert the outsider's grudge against its exclusiveness into the insider's presumption of intimate knowledge. Similarly, the antic fury of the television columns is cynicism's tribute to sentimentality: he is punishing the box for not being 'imperishable' art. The joker is an acolyte in disguise, the coarse and rowdy digger an empurpled aesthete. *Fan-Mail* may not be good verse but is a fascinating study in the psychodynamics of cultural colonialism.

Julian Barnes

Rousing Stuff

Write Up by MOLLY PARKIN *Michael Joseph* £4.50

South of the Lights by ANGELA HUTH *Collins* £4.25

The Way Out by ROMAIN GARY translated by Sophie Wilkins *Michael Joseph* £4.25

Twins by BARI WOOD and JACK GEASLAND *Heinemann* £4.50

Bookishly browsing in the text of an aged copy of *Men Only*, I came across a touching statement of literary intention from Molly Parkin:

> When I was writing my first book . . . I had to have the reaction of Patrick [her husband] at the end of the day. And if he got an erection or the workings of something, then I knew it had been a successful day's writing. And so I really came to judge it by his reaction. I don't say I had my hand on his flies as he was reading it, but he would say halfway through it, 'It's coming, you know', or 'It's coming up', or 'Yes, this is a good bit'.

As an aesthetic *profession de foi* this may be a bit narrow, but Molly's practical concern for the reader is quite admirable. Few novelists must try out their stuff in quite such a direct and potentially hazardous fashion. It's hard to believe, for instance, that Angela Huth ever read out bits of *South of the Lights* to Mr Huth over the breakfast table. But one might envisage the scene: the gingham tablecloth, the silver tea service, the trilling voice tinkling out this long-winded georgic, a slight growl (was it a snore?), then the soft splat of face falling into kedgeree. This is the most narcoleptic novel I've read in a long time; a quality heightened, not relieved, by the quiet competence of the construction and the decent plainness of the style. If only it were worse, one mutters to oneself; if only it had, say, the rousing vulgarity of Miss Parkin's work. If only there weren't this compassion, this concern for her characters, this god-dammed sympathy, then perhaps there might be more vigour to Huth's account of a sub-postmaster's love for a girl hen-keeper. The book is meant, one supposes (since the sub-plot echoes it), to illustrate the confining nature of love, the frustration that the lover's possessiveness provokes. But to arrive even at this uncontroversial perception you have to plough through a lot of novel. Who will be the new queen hen in the henhouse when the old one dies? Will the henkeeper's flatmate be offered a place in a choir? Should the postmaster's parents go to the cinema? Such are the questions and tensions we are asked to feed on. It's easy to sound merely snobbish in being bored by this novel; what one is actually complaining about is that the novelist's warm 'understanding' of her spectacularly dull characters makes them duller, not livelier.

Romain Gary's heroes, of course, have never lacked cosmopolitan swagger; indeed, the influence which dogs *The Way Out* most obviously is Hemingway's *Across the River and Into the Trees*. An ageing, doubt-plagued former Resistance hero meets and loves an exotic Brazilian 22-year-old in (where else does one have final, fatal passions?) Venice. Sinking city, waning powers; nor is Venice the only exteriorisation of the hero's obsession with ending up. The economic crisis, the dying-off of the great financiers, Spengler's frequently-cited thesis of decline – it's quite a lot to have dangling symbolically from your virilia, and it's not surprising that he can't live with it. All this superstructure would be sillier (it is, of course, still *fairly* silly) if it weren't for Gary's bleak delineation of the daily pains of ageing – the hardening prostate, the return of self-consciousness, the nudging camaraderie of insecure greybeards bragging about their performance. Growing old is made to seem not an orderly progress towards tolerance and detachment, more a sweaty, unpredictable threat.

Twins is a good example of the latest American way to make $1 million (the price of the paperback rights). You take a spectacular newspaper story – here, a case of two gynaecologists, identical twins, found dead in their flash New York flat amid a calf-deep layer of garbage – and ease it into fiction. The actual details of the messy end you keep nudgingly close to the real case, hitching as much of a ride from authenticity as you can, and then work backwards, inventing motive, childhood, and the current market level of sex. Most important of all, you start at the end – with the bizarre deaths – because you can't trust your ability to hold your readers otherwise. As a way of creating a thriller-type novel it's far from dishonourable – Judith Rossner, for instance, used just this technique in *Looking For Mr Goodbar*. With her, though, the impulse was constantly towards creating fiction; here, the pull is always journalistic, and detail's main function is to authenticate, rarely to open up character. Still, you can't deny the result a certain coarse power.

You couldn't deny it to Molly Parkin either. *Write Up*, which follows *Up Tight* and *Full Up* (spot what they have in common) opens with a steal from the limerick about the plumber from Leigh, and goes on to beg and borrow from her experiences as a fashion journalist. Sensual pleasures are guiltlessly indulged by her spry-thighed heroine: there is a fair amount of eating, a lot of gobbling, and even some elevenses (a whole Spanish football team). Connoisseurs of Molly's fiction might wonder if her references to the fine arts are not now becoming a little too clogging; but this is doubtless too Parnassian an approach. Molly is a jolly lady who writes jolly bad books. You want more? You want, perhaps, the result of the Husband Test? Well, let's just say that her husband and I must work on different hydraulic systems.

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Crime Books

Louis Finger

Mere Murder

Edith's Diary by PATRICIA HIGHSMITH *Heinemann* £4.50

For most of her career, reviewers have been urging Patricia Highsmith to have a go at writing a Real Novel. Disheartening advice for her, presumably, since these same reviewers were simultaneously announcing to the world that the books she *had* published possessed gifts and insights well beyond the scope of most Real Novelists. She had, it was repeatedly proclaimed, much narrative power, psychological subtlety, ingenuity of composition, elegance of prose style, understanding of American middle class *mores*, etc. To have that lot credited to your account and still somehow be in the red – well, that's what comes of joining the Crime Writers' Association at an early age. If you've asked people not to take you seriously, they'll jump at the chance.

Unfair, without a doubt. And yet Patricia Highsmith has always to some extent collaborated in her own pigeon-holing; in lots of casual-looking ways she has acceded to the requirements of her genre. Even her most original creations – the Ripley tales, *Deep Water*, *Strangers on a Train* – have a more than ample supply of stock detective-yarn ingredients, and there has often been an air of market-conscious haste about her treatment of minor characters, brochure-ish foreign settings, coincidences wrenched in order to clear up any loose ends that she can't be bothered properly to follow through, and so on. Many of her novels of the Sixties seemed content to mimic the most striking of the habits or mannerisms that she had mastered in her first half-dozen books; there even seemed to be a weariness in this, a resigned willingness to let mere incident take over, to rest content with plumping out the crime-novel formula with a bit of her by then celebrated understanding of the obsessed psyche.

It was only with the re-emergence of the Ripley character in *Ripley Under Ground* that Miss Highsmith seemed to recover the intensity, and the intense curiosity, that had made even the most formula-ridden stretches of her early work so chilling. The Ripley-Greenleaf balance of insufficiencies had been repeated on and off in later novels – Ray Garrett/Edward Coleman in *Those Who Walk Away* and Rydal Keenor/Chester MacFarlane in *The Two Faces of January* are typical instances of the Highsmith preoccupation with weirdly spellbound male relationships – but it was never given quite the same subtlety and animation. The triumph of Ripley is that his paranoia is supportive; he genuinely believes that there's an injustice in the ordering of things – why, having equipped me with all else in such abundance, does nature withhold the one gift I need to make me absolutely perfect? Not just withhold it, but turn around and hand it out to someone who in every other respect is worthless, barely fit to live? A lot of people feel this way; it's an obsession that lurks somewhere at the heart of even the most forlorn and sluggish grumble. In most, it merely makes for sulks; in Ripley, it produces a series of neat, untroubled homicides.

And this is so often the mode in which Highsmith excels; she persuades us that it really could go either way. 'It' may vary, but the suspense is at some level common to us all, however humdrum, well-ordered or bogged down we pride ourselves on having managed to become. Up to now, Miss Highsmith has chosen to alert us by exhibiting the spirals of frightful and outlandish consequence that it's possible to get caught up in, and – with Ripley – how it's all too easy to be awful. In *Edith's Diary*, the matter is approached from, as it were, the far end of the tunnel. Instead of moving outwards from the banal to the spectacular, we are led deeper and deeper into the heart of the banal, to where the real horror is of what's utterly familiar. Miss Highsmith employs her dead-pan suspense techniques to unfold the day-to-day, year-to-year, minutiae of a life that's almost wholly passive, a life that is defined in nearly every detail by its obligations, its rituals, its chores, its ever-darkening banality.

Edith is a well-off, Left-progressive, middle-middle-class housewife, a busy and capable manager, a loyal wife, and a genial and tolerant mother to her only child. When the book opens, the family is packing to leave for a new house in the country, where Brett's salary will be lower but the air less polluted, where there will be space for the boy to grow up in and opportunity for her and Brett to start their own Left-progressive town newspaper and in their small way maybe do some good. It sounds a reliable recipe for a distinctive type of American good life. Edith writes optimistically about the move in the diary she's been keeping for some years.

It's a fairly typical Highsmith opening, so when the packing is interrupted briefly by the sound of the boy Cliffie tormenting the cat, or when Edith reflects idly on an ugly dream she's had a few nights earlier, we settle down to wait for the menace to start building up. And this is more or less where we stay throughout the book. Things happen: Brett's old uncle is moved into the house and proves demanding and irritating; Cliffie grows more and more sullen and disaffected; Brett falls in love with his secretary

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and goes off with her; there are deaths in the family and quarrels with neighbours; there are the impinging political upheavals of Vietnam, Watergate, and so on.

Summed up, it's a fairly ordinary sequence of events; and, although the neutral, itemising clarity of Highsmith's prose hints all the time that an eruption is just around the corner, the book's real shock effect is registered precisely through the steady lifelessness of the lives it so inertly charts. Gradually we are made aware that there are two ways of describing Edith's life, and that the second way – the way that sees it as horribly devoured by odious dependents – is the way Edith can't afford to contemplate. Hence her diary, in which she invents a successful career for her son, arranges a satisfactory marriage, two fine children, frequent loving visits to the old homestead. The keeping of the diary and the clinging to the last meticulous, desperate detail of her imprisoning routine is what she hopes will keep her sane; and, of course, if that effort fails, she'll be the last to know. As the pressure intensifies, the most mundane domestic function is made to seem like an icy little melodrama. It's not going to be easy from now on for Miss Highsmith to scare us with mere murder.

Julian Symons

The Invisible Man

The Burning of Evelyn Foster by JONATHAN GOODMAN *David & Charles* £5.50
Crippen: The Mild Murderer by TOM CULLEN *Bodley Head* £4.95

For me the most fascinating real life crime stories must always have a flavour of mystery. Mystery is the magnet attracting us in the cases of Bravo (who did it?) and Adelaide Bartlett (how was it done?). In this century the Wallace case is outstanding with its ambiguous alibi based on the splendid name of Qualtrough. Oscar Slater, on the other hand, comes at the top of the Second Division because his is basically a case of mistaken identity. The death of Evelyn Foster on the Northumberland moors in 1931 is one of the half-dozen most baffling murder mysteries of this century, all the more interesting because it is so little known. Nobody was tried or even accused, and although the newspaper pictured on the book jacket says 'Woman found murdered on lonely moor', it has not even been generally recognised as a murder case.

The facts as given at the time can be simply stated. Evelyn Foster was the daughter of a family that owned the garage at Otterburn, a pleasant village between Newcastle and Jedburgh. The Fosters ran a taxi service, and on a cold January day Evelyn picked up a man who asked to be taken into Ponteland, on the fringe of Newcastle. She took him back to Otterburn where he said he would go into the Percy Arms for a drink, told her family and fixed the charge, picked up the man again at Otterburn Bridge, and started the 24-mile drive to Ponteland. They were six miles away from it when he attacked her, forced her over to the side of the car, drove it on to the moor, and set light to it. The driver of one of Foster's buses found her there, crawling towards the road, terribly burned. She died early the next morning, but not before saying in reply to her mother's question that the man had 'interfered' with her. Her last words were, 'I have been murdered.'

Why, then, is this not recognised as a case of murder? Because the police found no trace of the man. He had not been into the Percy Arms, he was not seen at the bridge, no trace of him was found. At the inquest, held in the War Memorial Hall near the pub, medical evidence was given that she had not been raped, and indeed was a virgin. The jury, strongly against the coroner's direction, brought in a verdict of wilful murder against some person unknown. Afterwards, however, the Northumberland Chief Constable, Captain Fullarton James, said flatly that the man Evelyn had described did not exist.

Jonathan Goodman, who has already written much the best book about the Wallace case, has devoted considerable detective skills and energies to investigating the Foster affair on the spot. He shows in detail the inefficiency of the police handling of the case. Typical of this was the fact that they put no guard over the car until the morning after it was found. Before the morning at least one journalist had thoroughly examined the car, and left his prints all over it.

In extenuation of the police errors it should be said that there were no detectives in the 300-odd strong County Constabulary, that the force's motorised transport consisted of one car and four motor cycles, and that forensic science had been used by them only once before in solving a case. Captain Fullarton James, who had been Chief Constable for more than 30 years, was a retired officer of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, and a local character. He devised a system of postcards coded Smith, Jones and Robinson, sent to tell officers whether or not to bring their bicycles to parades.

Mr Goodman goes much further than attacking the police handling the case – in which the local constable, now dead, played a large and just possibly sinister part. He analyses the medical evidence relating to a sexual attack on Evelyn and shows that it was worth very little because of her burns, disposes of the police theory that she set fire to the car herself, and offers an admittedly speculative theory about the identity of the invisible man. His book, the first on the case, is an admirable piece of reconstruction, lucidly told and finely organised.

Sir Melville Macnaghten, Assistant Commissioner of the CID at the time of the Crippen murder, said in his memoirs that no case has ever fascinated the British public in quite the same way. Tom Cullen quotes this, but naturally enough doesn't mention Sir Melville's further comment that the case was really not very remarkable. I should put Crippen into the First Division but not at the top of it, on the ground that the chief interest rests in the radio message, the chase across the Atlantic, and the fact that Ethel le Neve was dressed as a boy, rather than in anything specifically related to the murder itself.

I should be in a minority. There is no doubt, anyway, that Mr Cullen has written an excellent book about Crippen and the ladies. He offers not exactly a new view of the familiar tale of 39 Hilldrop Crescent but a different approach to it, one that concentrates the spotlight on the characters rather than the crime. By looking at Crippen's background of bogus medicine more closely than is common – he was for some years a kingpin of Professor Munyon's Homeopathic Remedies in New York ('I acted as advisory physician and had charge of the chemical laboratory') and came to London at a handsome salary to open a new branch – he puts him into a more intelligible perspective than that shown by considering only his life in England. He appears as the archetypal phoney medicine man who half believes in his own quack remedies. In one of his letters from prison he urges Ethel not to neglect his new painkiller Sans Peine, which may yet make their fortunes. He was also the archetypal masochist cuckold, both desiring and detesting Belle's masterfulness. When at last the situation became intolerable, he killed her.

The sympathy Crippen has aroused is almost as irrelevant as the surprise expressed by Raymond Chandler and others that, after totally deceiving Inspector Dew, he should have taken fright and run for America. He was neither a skilful murderer nor a persecuted 'little man', but an unambitious petty crook with a psychological make-up partly satisfied by Belle's dominance, partly by the boyish Ethel. All this is interesting, and Mr Cullen is the first writer to do anything like justice to it, but the humdrum quality of the actual murder and the concealment of the body still leave Crippen only round about the middle of the First Division.

Among this week's contributors:

JULIAN SYMONS has just completed a book on Edgar Allan Poe, to be published by Faber; *A Three Pipe Problem* appeared in 1975 from Collins.

The last James Bond novel was written by KINGSLEY AMIS under the pseudonym of Robert Markham, and published by Cape in 1968. He is also the author of *The James Bond Dossier*.

GAVIN LYALL'S book on war-games, *Operation Warboard* (written with Bernard Lyall), appeared last year.

TED ALLBEURY'S *The Special Collection* is published this week in paperback by Granada; his next thriller, *Call No Man Happy*, by Peter Davies in November.

LOUIS FINGER is a well-known Soho personality.

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Kingsley Amis

Shaken, But Not Stirred

James Bond, the Spy Who Loved Me by CHRISTOPHER WOOD *Cape* £3.50

Ian Fleming's ninth novel, *The Spy Who Loved Me*, was published in 1962. Except perhaps for one short episode, it is not a spy story but a mildly touching thrillerish romance, recounted in the first person by the 'me' of the title, a nice French-Canadian girl with an unfortunate sexual history and a nasty current predicament in an Adirondacks motel. A kindly, capable English policeman called James Bond turns up just over halfway through and sorts everything out. Some male reviewers, though no female ones, assailed the book as 'unpleasant' and 'pornographic' (we've come a long way in 15 years) while in fact disliking the naïvely patriotic and anti-Soviet attitudes of author and hero without quite caring to put it that way.

Always sensitive to criticism couched in moral terms, Fleming stipulated that this story of his should never be filmed; the title alone might be used. So it has been. A plot in which the baddies' grand design is burning down the motel for the insurance (admittedly with the heroine thrown in) would in any case hardly have done for a Bond film of the later 1970s: space stations, laser bombs and global takeovers are *de rigueur* here. There is plenty of that sort of thing in *James Bond, the Spy Who Loved Me*, which is the book of the film *The Spy Who Loved Me*, out soon.

Christopher Wood is part-author of the screen-play of this film. His Bond is largely unreconstructed, still drinking shaken dry martinis and still alive in spite of still being unable to draw and fire his Walther PPK in under three-fifths of a second (even FBI men are expected to manage in one-quarter). M has gone soft, allowing his desk-top to be specially prepared for a briefing demonstration and looking at Bond not without affection. The new 'me' is Major Anya Amasova of SMERSH, a sad come-down from her archetype, Corporal Tatiana Romanova in *From Russia, with Love*. And the chief heavy, one Sigmund Stromberg, an insane pelagiophilic ex-undertaker endearingly bent on sparking off World War III, lacks the presence of Goldfinger or Mr Big.

Enough of comparisons: Mr Wood has bravely tackled his formidable main task, that of turning a typical late Bond film, which is basically facetious, into a novel after Fleming, which must be basically serious. To this end he has, by my count, left out nine silly gadgets and 16 silly cracks which were in the script. He has also left out, to my surprise, a marvellous fight on a train that challenges comparison with the one in *From Russia, with Love*. The heavy concerned, a seven-and-a-half-footer with steel teeth, name of Jaws, is the best thing

SUSPENSE FROM MACMILLAN

DEAD RUNNER
FRANK ROSS
'The book which is fiction today — but could so easily be fact tomorrow' *Evening News*
'An atomic Bond' *Len Deighton* £3.95

THE CHURCHILL COMMANDO
TED WILLIS
'Fast, episodic, could-it-happen here thriller calculated to make insomniacs wonder *could* it?' *Matthew Coady, Guardian* £3.95

THE MARRIAGE BUREAU MURDERS
JOHN BINGHAM
'Unique chronicle of homicidal perversion ... Bingham's blackest and best for some books' *Maurice Richardson, Observer* £3.25

CHEYNEY'S LAW
PATRICK COSGRAVE
'A Buchan-type thriller with fashionable overtones of violence ... this fast-paced story of the Secret Service and Scotland Yard is very satisfying' *Elizabeth Berridge, Daily Telegraph* £3.25

THE SILENT WORLD OF NICHOLAS QUINN
COLIN DEXTER
'Nice eccentric setting for another of Inspector Morse's Oxford investigations' *Maurice Richardson, Observer* £3.50

THE ONCE A YEAR MAN
MILES TRIPP
'A scintillating love-and-spy story which carries its own built in conviction ... hooked me, and kept me hooked' *Evening Standard* £3.25

MACMILLAN LONDON

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in both book and film. Mr Wood is not always exact: Bond, out skiing, muses that you 'can lay for a long time in the bottom of a crevasse' – I doubt if even Bond could manage more than a brief lay in such circumstances. But the descriptions are adequate and the action writing excellent.

What nobody could have cut out is the element of second-sight contingency planning (or negligence) that gets by in a film, indeed is very much part of the style of these films, but obtrudes in a book. Your enemy has an explosive motor-bike sidecar ready to launch at your car in case he's forgotten to kill you for certain and in secret a few minutes before. In case that misses, he has already aloft a helicopter fitted with jets and cannon. Your car is submersible in case you meet such a helicopter while driving on a coast road. In case you submerge your car he has a midget submarine waiting. In case he has you have underwater rocket-launchers.

Later, in his supertanker, which is really a giant submarine-trap, your enemy has a revolving gun-emplacement and four-inch armoured shutters with machine-gun slits over his control-room in case the submarine crews he's taken prisoner and forgotten to kill break out of the 'brig' and start trying to take over with spare weapons they find in the magazine, where there's also enough stuff just lying around to build a bomb that'll blast through the armour-plate. Second-sight sportsmanship?

And earlier . . . but forget it. You safely can.

Gavin Lyall

Hard Transplants

The Man With The President's Mind by TED ALLBEURY *Peter Davies* £3.95
Send No More Roses by ERIC AMBLER *Weidenfeld* £3.95
The Glimpses of the Moon by EDMUND CRISPIN *Gollancz* £4.25

The basic idea of *The Man With The President's Mind* is simple and logical: after Khrushchev misjudged Kennedy over the Cuban crisis, the Kremlin feels it needs a better insight into a new (fictional) American president before touching off yet another crisis. So it picks one of its own academics who knows American politics, builds him a replica of the Oval Office at the White House, feeds him a pure diet of American newspapers, radio and TV, and asks him to predict each reaction as a step-by-step takeover of Berlin begins.

In précis, this may sound corny, but on the page it is fleshed out with plenty of realistic detail: minor Russian agents gathering the TV and radio tapes, bewildered Western agents catching glimpses of the gathering storm and the foxy mind advising it. And advice is all the dummy president can give; when the crunches start coming, the Kremlin instinctively starts mistrusting its own carefully constructed intelligence source – a reaction that will strike a chord with anybody who's had any connection with the spook business.

The corn only grows tall on the private side. In an age when your sex-life is supposed to influence every other aspect of your life, the selection committee have chosen – knowingly – a man as randy as a rabbit to doppelgang a president described as 'Puritan' (Woody Allen would have done a lovely job on a vice versa set-up). So enter a green-eyed nympho from Edna O'Brien country, who shares our hero's T-bones and introduces him to American beer and *Casablanca* on TV (I thought she must be a KGB plant, because she claims to have seen the movie 99 times and *still* thinks somebody says 'Play it again, Sam').

Dramatically, you certainly need something to break up what looks like being a perfect plot – and the scenario for the Berlin takeover is frighteningly convincing. But does our shadow president fall in love? Do the baddies separate him from his love? Does he decide to . . .? I'm afraid you're right. It's the old problem of having invented a perfect murder/kidnapping/bank caper – which isn't difficult – and then finding no way to crack it except with a sledge-hammer. But the rest of the story is first-class stuff.

At his best, Eric Ambler is the best crime writer in the business – and at his worst he's still very nearly the best. *Send No More Roses* lies somewhere in between: it's a rambling, discursive flash-backing story of a few days at an Alpes Maritimes villa where three criminologists are interviewing a successful and semi-retired operator in the field of tax evasion, money-laundering and so forth – while outside the agents of a shadowy one-man Mafia prowl and may be about to do more than prowl. It's more complicated than that, of course, and the loose weave of the plot could be what keeps this from being top-shelf Ambler.

I've also seen him criticised for making his first-person storyteller the least likeable of the weak, sly, often self-deceiving little crooks that he seems to breed so easily. There's something in this, but it's very much a matter of degree. Ambler's greatest talent is to produce a feel of uneasiness in his readers. It isn't always a fear of death – the commonest coin of thriller-writing – but something less clear-cut that may be no more than disgrace, a jail term, loss of ill-gotten gains.

The uncertainty is of course part of it, but the real Ambler trick is to transplant into the upright citizens who buy hard-cover books the gut vulnerability of someone who carries a false passport and has never made an honest statement to a customs officer or tax-man in his life. And for them – and by transference, us – there is nothing to fall back on: nobody will put up bail, or write passionate columns in *The Times* about our imprisonment, or arrange to swap us for an agent of the other side. There is not even martyrdom in a righteous cause, as Philip Marlowe or James Bond might hope for. If we fall, it is into a bottomless pit of the instantly forgotten. So it could be a sort of fear of a sort of death, after all.

Missing . . .
and presumed dead
JOSEPH HAYES
'Here's the craftsman at his craft . . . combining espionage, mystery, suspense and romance. All effortlessly. Lots of fun.'
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£3.95

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Graham Lord, SUNDAY EXPRESS
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Little Angie
EMMA CAVE
'A corker . . . a brilliantly constructed narrative with many unusual touches . . . I recommend it with all my heart.'
Auberon Waugh, E. STANDARD
£3.50

ANDRE DEUTSCH

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Such feelings are certainly there in the ew book, but perhaps not as strongly as sual. There's a certain dryness – everything risp-fried but not enough sauce. Money anipulation lacks the obvious juiciness of andling jewellery, arms or drugs, and the entral character is perhaps too successful nd knowledgeable. But if it isn't a Cresta un, it's a very pleasant ramble, and just vatch – if you can – how Ambler handles is research. Not for him the fact displayed ke a campaign medal. You feel he's known bout underwater Nikons and laundering oney and how to get through a mine-field ll his life.

It's now over 20 years since Edmund rispin published one of his witty academic mateur-detective stories (Gervase Fen is he resident sleuth, *The Moving Toyshop* robably the best), and maybe *The Glimpses f the Moon* explains why: Crispin seems o have lost belief in the format. Here, he eems less interested in the murders – three f them, more gory than necessary (compensating for lack of interest?), and since e don't meet the victims alive we aren't uch involved – than in setting up a village opulated entirely with eccentrics and using to lambast petty bureaucrats and modern orals.

The best part is a 50-page set-piece that pure Carry On Crispin: a charge of police ars down a country lane jammed with a otor-cycle rally, a hunt, hunt saboteurs, herd of cows, the electricity board digging p (and exploding) a pylon – but, incredly, we don't know *why* it is so vital that e police get through. Even – perhaps specially – in farce, the motives have to be lear.

Ted Allbeury

It's the Real Thing

ust as in real life the 'intelligence of hardare' is becoming less important than the ntelligence of intention', so the battle rages n spy stories and thrillers between plot and haracter. Characterisation is undoubtedly inning. The old situation-thriller with the ight or nine men cooped up together on he ice, under the ice or over the ice has een exposed for what it always was – a mall step for man from the *Wizard* or the *Rover*. A move in the right direction admittedly, as significant, say, as from *The Desert Song* to *Der Rosenkavalier*. But hat we leave behind is not to be despised; e can give a nod of encouragement to ose who are still *enflammé d'enthusiasme*. Ve nod because these old friends at least et the prime test of the novel – they were redible and readable.

There was a time when the cat's-cradle f plot was expected to bear the burden of ardboard figures, but Deighton and Le arré put an end to all that. Today the riller writer is expected to have that extra ingredient – authenticity. Not the simplistic authenticity of the *Sunday Times* Insight team, with the dotted lines where Mr McGinty fell, nor the leering of the TV camera in Belfast that zooms in on a patch of blood; but rather the authenticity that recognises that dead men live again for widows when the Villa is on *Match of the Day*, and when they realise they can have first go at the Review Section every Sunday morning for the rest of their lives.

The provenance of *Spies and Spymasters* by Jock Haswell (Thames & Hudson £4.95) is both authentic and official. Whenever it touched on areas in which I had experience it was wholly accurate, and there will be many a member of that discreet club in Herbert Crescent who will appreciate Major Haswell's generous references to Special Operations Executive. If you ever fancied your hand at writing a spy story look at the picture of Philby on page 165 and write 1,000 words on what you see.

From the authenticity of fact to that of fiction. *Snap Judgment* (Macdonald & Jane's £3.95) is by Anthony Stuart and the blurb tells us that this is the pseudonym of a well-known author of non-fiction. So we can all start again those guessing games we played with Trevanion of *The Eiger Sanction*. Whoever Stuart is, he is obviously a linguist, much concerned with things Soviet, and a lot else besides; moreover, he can write. If Julian Symons can nominate Len Deighton as the poet of the spy story, then let me nominate Anthony Stuart as the Dylan Thomas of the genre. Excellent as a spy story, excellent as a novel, and far too good to be read in one indulgent session. An Iron Curtain defector now lives in Kensington and earns a living as an interpreter in the UN conference circus. Now read on.

Ted Willis's *The Churchill Commando* (Macmillan £3.75), if less ornately written, is a prime example of the good read. No messing about here! Hitchcock rather than Buñuel. He postulates a middle-class back-lash against the thugs and the yahoos, and skilfully builds up the sickening brutality that sparks the fire. The result is so credible that one wonders why it hasn't already happened.

The Tears of Autumn was Charles McCarry's second novel, a *roman à clef* set in Vietnam, where we followed its hero, the poet-agent, through swirling mists of other-culture. His third novel *The Secret Lovers* (Hutchinson £3.95) leaves the bougainvillaea behind. He uses the same hero, but the setting is Europe, so we can judge with a clearer eye whether the magic still works. It does, but in a different way. I once shared a house in Harar with an officer who was entirely single-minded about what his post-war life would be. He would live, happy for ever, in Saigon. He was a mixture of Dornford Yates and P. C. Wren, and so, in this story of the cold war and a manuscript smuggled from Russia, is Mr McCarry. His fans will enjoy it unreservedly.

We regret that in our fiction review last week two of the publishers' names were transposed. Manuel Scorza's Drums for Rancas *is published by Secker & Warburg; Bryan Magee's* Facing Death *by William Kimber.*

GOLLANCZ THRILLERS

Recently published:

Joan Aiken
'LAST MOVEMENT'

J. R. L. Anderson
'DEATH IN THE CITY'

Simon Brett
'STAR TRAP'

W. J. Burley
'THE SCHOOLMASTER'

Edmund Crispin
'THE GLIMPSES OF THE MOON'

Peter Van Greenaway
'THE DESTINY MAN'

Peter Somerville-Large
'EAGLES NEAR THE CARCASE'

Summer & autumn:

Douglas Clark
'THE GIMMEL FLASK'

Celia Fremlin
'THE SPIDER-ORCHID'

Michael Innes
'HONEYBATH'S HAVEN'

Kenneth O'Hara
'THE GHOST OF THOMAS PENRY'

Gregory Mcdonald
'CONFESS, FLETCH'

Anthony Price
'THE '44 VINTAGE'

Robert Player
'THE MONTH OF THE MANGLED MODELS'

John Sladek
'INVISIBLE GREEN'

'The John Creasey
CRIME COLLECTION 1977' ed. Herbert Harris. The CWA annual anthology

GOLLANCZ

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Ian Hamilton

There'll Always be an English

David English has had some time now in which to recover his composure, and his Sunday appearance on *The Editors* (BBC-1) was, I think, the first opportunity we have had to inspect the humiliated sleuth since his non-resignation. In a way, it's a pity that *The Editors* – this was the first of a new series – was not on hand at the time of the *Mail* fiasco; if the show has any serious monitoring function, that surely would have been the hour in which to prove it. But would English have appeared, at the height of his embarrassment; and if he had, would the affable George Scott have had the nerve to make him squirm?

Squirm? Isn't that a little harsh? Not after Sunday night's performance, in which English was pretty well allowed to run the show, and was never really pressed on any of the touchy points we wished to see him pressed on. I can't believe that the details of how the *Mail* so readily allowed itself to be taken for a ride are so *sub judice* that it was impossible for Scott to insist that English gave *his* narrative of the affair. Nor can I believe that *The Editors* would countenance a deal which enabled English to appear in his own defence without any of the proper accusations being permitted entry into court. So why the soft-pedal, why the willingness to let English take refuge in abstraction and pomposity, why the camaraderie: 'We used to be on the *Express* together, and so we both know . . .'?

Even the opening captions to the show were disconcerting. They showed English 'circulating' at a cocktail party; a smile here for a Pakistani, another drink here for a Jap – the spray-gunned hair and smile at maximum mobility as the editor eased smoothly from one handshake to the next. What were we meant to feel? That he's a charming bounder, that whatever his mistakes, he's really not too bad, that the easy self-confidence with which he has weathered the aftermath of his grotesque blunder is really a quality we see too little of these days? It wasn't possible to fathom the intention, but the effect certainly was to make English seem impressively resilient.

And this was the effect too of the ensuing interview. Scott set his face in stern, headmasterly contours but the actual questions were almost begging to be ducked. Tell me, why didn't you resign? He'd offered to, but Harmsworth persuaded him to stay. Isn't it then difficult to run the paper, with everyone's confidence in you somewhat shaken? 'When that kind of error is made an editor has to restart again [*sic*] with his proprietors and his readers and his staff.' Scott wanted to know if English didn't feel some measure of discomfort, staying on. Not really; in fact, if we really wanted to know, he felt that the Labour Party had tried to use his little mistake as an opportunity to smash the *Daily Mail*, but 'they over-played their hand' and English, by manfully sticking to his post, had made it clear to them that the *Mail* still had some nuts.

Or words to that effect. There was a hint that Scott might be about to ask him how such an incompetence could have occurred on a paper so professionally boastful as the *Mail*, but English swiftly countered by recalling the investigative skills of the departed Henry Longmuir – 'He was very thorough, he didn't rush things.' If Longmuir had been there, none of this would have happened, was the claim ('we never had mistakes with Longmuir'); the trouble was that English journalists are not yet sufficiently familiar with the high investigative skills of their American counterparts, and nor do they have the same access to 'public interest' information. What had this got to do with the 'scoop' under discussion; did it really need terrific *skill* to check that Ryder's signature was somewhat like the signature of Ryder? How much sheer vindictive wish-fulfilment had gone into the hasty front-page publication of the damaging dud document? Scott didn't ask, and English was allowed to meander boringly into the lessons he had learnt from his sojourn in the States, and how these lessons had helped him make the *Mail* the great paper that it is today.

As if seeking accusations that would be even more easily answerable (because more abstract and remote) than the one he hadn't been able to bring himself to put, Scott dredged up a few earlier *Mail* misdemeanours. There was the tear-drenched airlift of South Vietnamese orphans (and, such was the *Mail*'s characteristic speediness, a fair number of non-orphans); hadn't that been something of a stunt? No, it hadn't: 'To be honest with you, I didn't think it would be a great stunt.' Well, then, what about your attitude to racial matters: 'Do you give enough care to your treatment of race relations?' Yes, he does: but 'I don't wish to bend over backwards to the race relations industry'. 'Industry? Come, come.' 'It *is* an industry, and a proliferating industry.'

There were flashes here which suggested that a sharper interrogation would have broken down English's super-cool demeanour. Asked about his loathing of the Labour Party, he came very close to conceding that the *Mail*'s prejudice now operates as policy: 'If there is a story that is accurate and damaging to the Labour Party, I suppose a reporter knows that if he finds a story of that kind it will get space.' Much meat to be pounced on there, I'd say, but once again the chatter had to amble on. Infuriating as the whole thing was, I still treasure a slip of the slippery English tongue towards the end. Scott asked him what his position would be if Harmsworth took over the Beaverbrook group: wouldn't *Express*men, say, feel 'tainted' by association with the Leyland 'error'? 'I don't think my presence would affect the murder – the merger, one way or another.' I don't suppose it would.

The success of the reggae singer Bob Marley has sparked off a fashion for wormy-locked hairdo's among Notting Hill West Indians. They call themselves Rastafarians, and are often to be seen in a daze. The daze, we learned from *Everyman*'s BBC-1 inquiry into the Jamaican origins of the cult, is in fact a spiritual condition induced by much intake of the drug marijuana. The original Rastamen view pot-smoking as 'an act of worship'; under the drug's stimulating influence, worshippers are the more clearly able to contemplate their spiritual home – Ethiopia, though no one quite knew why – and to revere the 'supremely, uniquely divine' Haile Selassie. Selassie lives, a Black Christ; once that is understood, Rastas are prepared to accept the truth of any New Testament contexts into which he can be fitted. Well, I've heard of Christians being stoned, but . . .

'Those two blokes are playing like a couple of girls,' growled my admittedly half-pissed companion during one of the livelier stretches of the match between Virginia Wade and Rosemary Casals, and I could more or less see what he meant: Wimbledon this year has featured an unusually offensive parade of sulking, headbanded narcissists, and by day three I actually found myself reminiscing about Chuck McKinley.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Kept Women

The Madras House *Olivier*
Candida *Albery*
Singles *Greenwich*

If we're to judge by Lilith in *Back to Methuselah*, the nearest he came to seriously portraying God, Shaw supposed the universe to be under the thumb of a metaphysical mother, an omnipotent version of Candida, very condescending about the feeble efforts of you and me, the boys in her cosmic nursery. We'll have, I suspect, to wait for Michael Holroyd's biography for a full psychological profile of the sage of Chalfont St Giles, one that takes proper account of the after-effects of the ice-lady who actually bore him; but any student of his plays will agree that his attitude to women was pretty unsatisfactory, and certainly less adult than that of the ablest of his contemporaries and disciples, Granville Barker. Shaw the Fabian would doubtless have endorsed the prime conclusion of *The Madras House*, which is

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that we should educate our girls to be citizens rather than ladies; but Shaw the man, or man-substitute, could never have assembled the mass of evidence that sustains it.

It is a play of astonishing scope, a drapery-emporium saga that may be roughly compared to a prolonged trip to a human zoo specialising in female exhibits. The cages, and they *are* cages, contain a drove of purposeless spinsters, a deserted wife, a cosseted and cocooned ditto, three mannequins, a pregnant shopgirl abandoned by her gentleman-caller, a professional chaperone with lesbian tendencies, and others. The men stand outside detachedly discussing the animals, some of them barely aware they belong to the same species. The divide between keepers and kept is absolute and unyielding. The keepers may be sentimental or cynical, sensual or ascetic, conformist or enlightened, but it is they who provide the work, the recreation, the ideas, the orders, the food, the lodging, and, rather especially in this context, the clothes; they who decide that 'women haven't morals or intellect in our sense of the word' or spin visions of suburban matrons 'bursting through the laurel bushes clad in the colours of the rainbow'. The kept languish behind their bars, allowing themselves to be manipulated, exploited, petted or neglected, mostly without protest.

The front-lines of the tussle between the sexes have, of course, shifted a long way since 1910, but it would be a complacent critic who saw no lessons in *The Madras House*. True, the iniquities of the 'living-in system', the ruse by which Edwardian shopkeepers kept their assistants captive and broke, are no longer with us; but the fight to secure equality of opportunity and reward is, as we all know, far from over. True, more women are better educated, and fewer mutilated by that social saw-mill, the 'finishing school'; but many are encouraged, even obliged, to squander their brains. Barker's zoological treatise war-history, oppression-chronicle, call it what you will, is still very much alive, and still impressive for its breadth of sympathy and distinction of mind. How many dramatists, a full 60 years before Harrods fell to the Arabs, would hit on the idea of making the store's self-exiled founder a practising Mohammedan, capable of offering a Martian's-eye-view of our civilisation and convincingly concluding that 'Europe in its attitude to women is mad'? And how many would then pull him off the judge's dais, thrust him into the dock, and expose him as an extreme instance of the belief that women's place is the home – or, in his case, the harem?

Paul Scofield, bearded and fancy-waistcoated for the part, makes a rather saturnine satyr, his sensuality a sort of terminal honk, rumbling dismally down through the nose. All the perfume in Arabia could not dispel his built-in gloom. But there's much to admire in William Gaskill's busy, humorous production – Paul Rogers the frazzled and hunted father of six unmarriageable girls, Joss Ackland an American mogul with a sonorous, mawkish manner and piratic instincts, Dinah Stabb at once provocative and mulish as the evening's pluckiest defier of sexual virtue, and Ronald Pickup as Philip Madras, the Mohammedan's heir and the nearest to a hero we're offered. This is a particularly tricky role, partly because it tends rather further towards priggishness than Barker seems to have realised, and partly because it's burdened with 'solutions' that could seem awfully banal, given the complexity of the debate. Philip will renounce most of his income, encourage his luxurious wife to be socially useful, give his daughter a puritan education, and get elected to the LCC, there to build the millennium brick by grubby brick. But Mr Pickup anticipates the dangers, and manages to make us feel he's earnestly tracking down inconclusive truths, perplexedly hewing out a moral path for himself: which, come to think of it, is precisely what Barker makes us feel he, too, is doing with the help of this earnest, perplexed, fascinating play.

And precisely what the opinionated, arrogant Shaw rarely seems to suggest about himself. But steady. One more step, and this column will be in a painfully aberrant posture, which is to agree with John Osborne, who last week pronounced *Candida* an 'ineffably feeble piece' and its author 'the most fraudulent, inept writer of Victorian melodramas ever to gull a timid critic'. That is too much, even for a long-overrated play. What Osborne doesn't realise is that Shaw is consciously and ironically using Victorian forms, such as melodrama, to demolish Victorian wisdom, and that *Candida* reaches its conventional conclusion for a pretty unconventional reason. The heroine rejects the poet Marchbanks for the clergyman Morell, not because it's her wifely duty to remain with her husband, but because her husband, for all his fustian confidence, is the weaker of the two and needs her the more.

Still, Shaw's reverential attitude to Candida, the most glutinously maternal of all the super-mums straddling his pages, does make it difficult to respond even to a capable production of the play, like the one Michael Blakemore has pieced together. Denis Quilley, neatly exploiting that adaptable smile of his, makes a breezy, smug, but vulnerable Morell; Marchbanks, the part once graced by Granville Barker, is played by an actor as arresting as he's unfamiliar, a sulky cherub, a baleful Midwich Cuckoo called Patrick Ryecart; and then, oh dear, there is Deborah Kerr, talking very slowly, patiently and deliberately, as if to a roomful of backward children. She might be a mellower, rather cuddlier version of Mrs Thatcher. Truth to tell, her Candida grated on my nerves; but, then again, that is probably a tribute to the accuracy of her acting, because my nerves were never designed to withstand Candida.

It would be nice to acclaim John Bowen's *Singles*, which is based on a small-ad once published in the NEW STATESMAN and boasts a cast of NS readers, though not all as dedicated and keen-witted as we like to suppose here in Great Turnstile. But the idea is better than the fulfilment. A girl advertises for a stud, grudgingly accepts a candidate, has her baby, then rejects it. The opportunities for fun are obvious, but after an amusingly bureaucratic interview – 'Have you heart trouble? Epilepsy? VD of any kind?' – Mr Bowen's wit sags. Nor is much made of more serious things, like the shifting feelings of sexual hirer and hireling. Ray Brooks is amiable and harmless throughout, and Frances de la Tour is uniformly sullen, charmless, uninterested and uninteresting. The NS must, I fear, withhold its imprimatur.

World Cup

Brian Glanville

Foul Play

'Animals, animals!' the young Argentinian supporters hissed at us, as we journalists made our way into the vertiginous Boca Juniors Stadium, La Bombonera ('The Chocolate Box'). During the match, the chant was taken up in chorus, the National Anthem was deafeningly whistled, the Uruguayan referee was called, in swelling chants, *hijo de puta* – son of a whore. Late in the second half, Trevor Cherry, the English left-back, having merely jostled the Argentinian forward Daniel Bertoni, was hit in the mouth with a violent left hook, lost a tooth, and stood incredulous, blood welling from the wound, as the referee sent off both him and his aggressor. Eight days later, after a much worse and more sustained display of physical aggression by the Argentinians, Pernia, the right-back, punched Scotland's left winger, Willie Johnston, in the kidneys, knocking him to the ground. Again, both players were sent off. The cloven hoof was showing all too clearly; and there was still a year to go until the World Cup Finals were due to be played in Argentina. What will happen then freezes the imagination.

For there is, about Argentinian football, an almost Manichaean quality. On the one hand, artistry, technique, enormous skill. On the other, brutality. The qualities can co-exist, not only in the same team, but in the same player, a fact well demonstrated in the World Cup of 1966, when the word 'animals', which has rung down the years.

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was first uttered by Sir Alf Ramsey, England's team manager. It has so often been quoted out of context, so seldom properly accounted for, that it is worth going back to that torrid summer day at Wembley, the quarter-finals of the World Cup, to recall what really happened.

Argentina lost 1-0 to a rather costive England team, having been reduced early in the match to ten men when their huge captain, Antonio Rattin, was sent off by a tiny German referee, Herr Kreitlein. The confrontation had been physically a grotesque one, Rattin looming over Kreitlein, following him about the field, hectoring him in a Spanish he did not understand, pointing repeatedly at his armband to show that he, as the captain, had the right of protest. Herr Kreitlein, who had been jotting the names of Argentinian players in his notebook with the enthusiastic diligence of a schoolboy taking engine numbers, was plainly not the man to be thus pestered. Rattin was sent off and, after infinite delay, further anguished protest, a threat by the whole of his team to walk off, he very slowly went. There could scarcely be much sympathy. His team had, from the first, made open play impossible with an endless series of fouls, some petty, some painful. The game over, several Argentinian reserve players tried to attack Herr Kreitlein, but were prevented by the police. It was the subsequent happenings in the tunnel, outside the dressing rooms, which so upset Alf Ramsey.

There, Juan Carlos Lorenzo, Argentina's manager, approached England's officials rubbing finger and thumb together. Argentinian players urinated against the walls. Others banged on the door of the England dressing-room. Interviewed immediately after this, Ramsey said that he hoped England's next opponents would be interested in playing football 'and not act as animals'. Hardly, in the circumstances, outrageous.

Like the poor, Juan Carlos Lorenzo is always with us, and though he is not now – not yet – in charge of Argentina's team, his influence is manifest. I met him first in 1962 in the stadium of Rancagua, the scruffy little copper-mining town in Chile where England played their 1962 World Cup matches. England beat a harsh but, by comparison with 1966, relatively restrained Argentina team 3-1. Afterwards, in the dressing-room, admirers planted a consoling kiss on Lorenzo's plump, dark cheek. *'Muy bien, Juan Carlos!'* they said.

Since 1966, Lorenzo's vendetta against British football has been manifest. He was manager of the Lazio team (whose shirts he once burned after a lost game) which in 1976, attacked Arsenal's players after a Fairs Cup match at a banquet in a Roman restaurant, he himself taking a leading part in the brawl. He was in 1974 manager of the Atletico Madrid team which came to Glasgow, played Celtic in a European Cup semi-final, kicked them comprehensively, and had three players sent off. Now he is back in Buenos Aires, manager of Boca Juniors, whose policies of blood and iron, coupled with a curious championship structure which provides second chances, has given them success.

In charge of the international team is the 37-year-old Luis Cesar Menotti, tall, lean, hollow-cheeked, long-haired, who from the first insisted that violence and intimidation were obsolete. If he thought physical methods, aggressive players, might win him a World Cup, he said, he'd use them, but he knew they wouldn't. They were useless against the 'total football' of the best European teams. One wished him well; but wondered. After all, Argentina, since the 1974 World Cup, had lost the equivalent of two whole international teams. Menotti had been left with a mere rump. To meet, to talk to, he is engaging, fluent and impressive. It was possible to treat the incident of Bertoni – who dissolved in tears afterwards, apologising to everyone in sight, and was at once suspended by his own Association – as a freak. The Argentina-Scotland game was another matter.

Another referee – a Brazilian now, a Uruguayan before – was plainly too frightened to send only the Argentinian off. Worst of all, Menotti, after the match, made sad, disingenuous remarks about the Scottish players feigning injury, about the Scottish fans who had invaded and torn up the pitch after the game at Wembley. How could one have faith in him, and his ability to control his team?

One's thoughts went uneasily back to 1967 when, in Buenos Aires, Celtic's goalkeeper Ronnie Simpson was knocked out by a stone before the world club championship game against Racing Club, to the horrible fracas in Montevideo which followed that match; to the Bombonera, a year afterwards, Estudiantes v. Manchester United, when one saw Bobby Charlton gashed across the shin, Stiles butted in the face; to 1969, when Milan were so brutally assaulted that General Ongania, the President, threw three of the Estudiantes players in gaol. All this may well await the teams competing in next year's World Cup. Perhaps England are fortunate that they're so unlikely to be there. Perhaps it is not surprising that the manager of one of the strongest teams in Central Europe has privately expressed the hope that he won't be there either.

Art

John Spurling

Skittish

The Artist's Eye *National Gallery, until 24 July*

This is Anthony Caro's summer. I undersold him three weeks ago when I said that he had work on view at the Hayward and National Galleries as well as in Battersea Park. Yet another piece, his earliest steel abstract *Twenty Four Hours*, is in the *British Artists of the Sixties* exhibition at the Tate. Who is this Caro and what is he to us?

The question is a tricky one, for while it's safe to say that the general public, if it ever came across his work, would regard it as so much scrap, his reputation in the international art world grew so prodigiously after the appearance of *Twenty Four Hours* in 1960 that the axe is already being laid to it. Herein lies the tragedy, or alternatively the comedy, of contemporary art: it is simply travelling too fast and not stopping for long enough. The customers are being left at the wayside, a large and vociferous group in the far distance at Rodin, other more complacent parties in the middle distance at Moore and Hepworth.

Avant-gardisme depends, of course, on the assumption that it is better to travel on, with or without the customers, than to arrive. Caro himself makes the classic, and characteristically urbane, apology for it:

> In every period the artist has to find a way through to a visual truth that works for him in the time he lives, and this may involve radical innovation, which is disturbing to contemporary eyes.

Caro's admirers believe him to be one of the outstanding innovators of this century, the first artist to develop wholly abstract sculptures – even his immediate precursor, the American David Smith, dealt in predominantly vertical, therefore totemic and associatively figurative, constructions. Born in 1924, holding a degree in engineering from Cambridge, trained as a sculptor in the Royal Academy Schools under Charles Wheeler, Caro spent his early thirties making distorted figures in bronze – one is reminded of Mondrian, who also began by painting ugly ducklings in an old syle before emerging as the most elegant of modern painters. Caro, in other words, has been exploring the possibilities of his innovation for only 17 years, yet in that time his pupils and followers have achieved their own reputations and still newer generations aspire to sweep them all away. No wonder that the passengers are missing their connections.

Indeed if you regard contemporary, which is to say developing, art as something too valuable to be left to artists and art critics, *The Artist's Eye* – this apparently slight exhibition consisting of one Caro sculpture and nine Old Master paintings chosen by him from the National Gallery's permanent collection – is potentially the most important show in London. It is not, as I have heard suggested, merely an opportunity for Caro to demonstrate his 'influences' nor – a view held by at least one of the National Gallery attendants – a joke at the expense of 'museum' art. Its importance lies, on the contrary, in its serious assertion of continuity, a two-way process which, as Borges has demonstrated with literary examples (notably in the story 'Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote' and the essay 'Kafka and His Precursors'), actually alters the look of the old by the light of the new.

The advantages brought to this encounter by Manet, Monet, Courbet, Cézanne, Rembrandt, Titian, Bellini and Antonello need no rehearsing. Their work represents Art – the true, the good, the beautiful – signed sealed and approved. Caro's advantages are more equivocal: he is alive, still making and he shares with the spectator the same world outside the walls of the Nationa Gallery.

The piece Caro has chosen to show *Orangerie*, dates from 1969, near the end of

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his immensely varied series of horizontal, linear constructions of painted steel and before he began using the huge sheets of raw, rough-edged steel of which the recent pieces in Battersea Park and at the Hayward are made. *Orangerie* is an untypical vertical construction, a platform raised to head-height above the floor by three struts (one slightly bent and the other two at angles) and two arcs. Its title was no doubt suggested by the leaf-like ploughshares which are the sculpture's most noticeable components, two sprouting up from the top of the platform, one appearing to drop off it towards the ground, while two others, attached to the two arcs at floor level, form independent verticals. The whole piece, painted a brownish pink, is unusually compact and pictorial, in the sense that it can be viewed complete from one standpoint; most of Caro's sculptures have to be toured physically by the spectator. *Orangerie* is sinuous, airy, seemingly weightless and pliable, well-nigh skittish.

Caro's effect on Monet, Manet *et al* is to revive one's eye for their illusionism, the cunning with which they have animated mere up and down with depth and space and created things both hard and soft out of nothing but paint. Antonello's small crucified Christ becomes something almost vegetable dropping from his severely central, geometrical cross against an empty sky, while the figures of Mary and John seated at the foot among stones and skulls and bringing the landscape round into an arc at either side, are at the same time rising elements in the composition; one is peculiarly aware of their ability to defy gravity, to get up and walk away. Courbet's glossy apples in their earthenware dish beside a pewter pot have the same dual sense of hardness and softness as Caro's biomorphic ploughshares; Monet's umbrellas in *The Beach at Trouville* and the canopy-like foliage of Titian's central tree in *Noli Me Tangere* make small platforms over the foreground, the better to have one believe in the spacious depths behind.

The two largest paintings on display – Manet's portrait of Eva Gonzalès and Rembrandt's *Saskia in Arcadian Costume* – hanging side by side, send one precipitately back to Caro. Yes, Saskia's garlanded stick and the raised right arm it supports and Eva's curved arms, one above the other, with the palette and brushes and the easel at which she paints, are making space swell and lift in the same way as Caro. The bundle of flowers half dropping out of Saskia's left hand and the peony fallen head-down beside Eva's skirt are not too far in spirit from the distilled profusion of Caro's conservatory. But what of the ladies themselves, their flowing draperies (Eva's smooth and cool, Saskia's heavy and brocaded), their soft hair, their palpable flesh? Such sensuousness is not at his command, yet it is clear from the very fact that he chose these paintings that he wishes it were. Recognising his limitations one can hardly forget that they too were limited, to specific subject-matter, to two dimensions on a wall, to worlds and times in which it was inconceivable that steel should be one of the basic materials of ordinary life, let alone that it should perform the same aesthetic service as a pleasure garden or a symphony.

Films

John Coleman

Snuffing It

Coup de Grâce (AA) *Academy One*
The Car (AA) and **Day of the Animals** (AA) *Plaza 1; Warner West End 3; ABCs Edgware and Fulham Roads*
Rich and Strange *Covent Garden Cinema*

The fashionable talk these days in circles where the new German cinema is discussed tends to revolve around three names, Wim Wenders, Werner Herzog and Rainer Werner Fassbinder. High time, then, that a fourth, Volker Schlöndorff, got more of a hearing. He started out 11 years ago with a pretty faithful version of Musil's *Young Törless*, since when he had made some nine films, one of which – *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum*, based on a Heinrich Böll novel – found me something less than enthusiastic last month. If one scans his output, including the unusual historical drama, *The Sudden Fortune of the Poor People of Kombach* (1971), and the highly contemporary study of a divorced woman, *Summer Lightning* of the following year, one is likely to be struck by the diversity of his subjects; he seems first and foremost a craftsman, capable of adapting his style to the matter at hand. In the day of the *auteur*, this may help to account for his comparative neglect: no doubt a dozen or so students are beavering away to contradict me as I write, but thesis-fodder he hardly is. The latest of his films to reach us is *Coup de Grâce*, drawn from the French author Marguerite Yourcenar's fiction of the same name, and it is not for nothing that he has dedicated it to the late Jean-Pierre Melville. When the young Schlöndorff started out, the German cinema was in the doldrums and it was Melville who took the boy under his wing. 'We got on at once. Almost immediately I felt that I had met my spiritual son . . .' It comes as no surprise to learn that this 'son' was assistant director on the splendid *Léon Morin, Prêtre*.

For it is this remarkable one-off of Melville's, the equivocal account of a doomed love between a priest and a hypersensitive woman during the Occupation, that has almost certainly influenced Schlöndorff's procedures in *Coup de Grâce*. The Yourcenar novel is set in 1919, in the wake of the Russian Revolution: the geography of it is the bedevilled area variously known in German as Kurland, Livland or the Baltikum, just parcelled out into the independent states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. These new nationalists, Red Army units and Bolshevik guerrillas, warring White Russian armies and German volunteer groups, are at one another's throats: so much is history and it is the maelstrom into which three hapless people are sucked.

Konrad von Reval and his friend from childhood, Erich von Lhomond (Matthias Habich), return to Reval Castle in Kratovice to find it turned into a barracks for German volunteers surrounded by red guerrillas: Konrad's sister, Sophie (Margarethe von Trotta), resumes her role as mistress of the household and there is crazy old Aunt Praskovia (the eerie Valeska Gert, a cabaret star in pre-Nazi Germany) to provide cackling moments of the macabre. A lesser man than Schlöndorff might have flinched from the mind-boggling quantity of different allegiances – Sophie secretly sympathises with the local communists – to be held in balance, but his three scriptwriters, among them Margarethe von Trotta once again, have very skilfully alternated short, establishing scenes with longer set-pieces – which is where I was reminded of Melville. In *Léon Morin*, the occupying troops, the business of curfew, were ever-present, more than a matter of background, but this was achieved through a sort of impressionism: key moments succeeded one another via a series of dousing fades, as if they were snuffed out before the next was briefly lit. Wintry Kratovice gets the same treatment, allowing the main story – of Sophie's unashamed love for Erich, who is more and more clearly Konrad's lover – to be played with all stops out.

Little tenderness is allowed. Sophie (raped before the tale begins) smokes a pipe and takes to heavy make-up and open affairs as Erich rejects her: one shot of her, legs in air, being roughly fucked by a partially clothed officer, demands that verb: she is a lady of extremes, down to her death, a damned heroine of her times. Elegiac music rapidly gives way to mad old Auntie at the piano at Christmas, much play made with kissing mistletoe. Erich sits down to help that aunt cut newspapers up for the loo. An astounding image has the bold soldiery setting off down a snowy road, simply vanishing as the camera appears to hold steady, to be replaced by one of their leaders galloping back the same route. Ghastly aristocratic manners blossom above the brutality, with French a favoured tongue in the high baroque episodes. As mirrored through the diabolic triangle of Konrad (killed in battle), Sophie and Erich, all society's in the melting-pot. Not in the least moving, it lingers in the memory.

Elsewhere, *The Car* – made by Elliot Silverstein (*Cat Ballou, The Happening, A Man Called Horse*) – is an auto-motivated nonsense that could have been called *The Hate Bug*, or *Hell on Wheels*. The 'sleepy Southwestern town of Santa Ynez' (synopsis) is woken up by a series of deaths occasioned by a black vehicle whose approach is often heralded by windstorms. Now and then we are afforded a fraudulent orange view of the streets from inside the Car, which stops only when a herd of frightened pedestrians takes refuge in a cemetery. The moral seems to be that garages would do well to offer exorcism as a side-line. Steven Spielberg's *Duel* surely had the last word about bangers and mash. Marginally better is William Girdler's *Day of the Animals*, which has our use of aerosols responsible for nature going really red in tooth and claw and attacking an ickily assorted bunch of survival-hikers in California's High Sierras. Out of *The Birds* and strictly for them, though.

More rewarding than either is an early,

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minor Hitchcock, *Rich and Strange* (1932), at the re-named Covent Garden Cinema (heretofore the Electric). Wooden Henry Kendall and the enticing Joan Barry as a young suburban couple who splurge a windfall on a cruise to the Far East. Some dialogue, but more titles, viz. 'Fred had met a Princess!' She's a phoney and vamooses with the windfall. Couple return home after shipwreck (and cooked cat aboard a Chinese junk) to steak-and-kidney pie and grey safety.

Jazz

Charles Fox

Down to Earth

Benny Carter: 'The King' *Pablo 2310 768* £3.25
'Benny Carter, Dizzy Gillespie, Inc.' *Pablo 2310 781* £3.25
Basie Jam No 2 *Pablo 2335 748* £3.25
'Ridin' In Rhythm' *World Records SHB 42* (2 LPs) £3.99

One of the nice things about jazz is the way it goes on being subversive. Four or five decades ago it symbolised – for plenty of Anglo-Saxons, anyway – an assault upon everything near and dear ('The syphilis of music' was James Agate's way of describing it). During and just after World War II it got touted as an urban folk music, a people's art, more anti-fascist than anti-social. Now, in an era of collectivism, just by remaining itself, jazz propagates the cult of individuality.

The good jazz musician projects his identity the moment he blows into a mouthpiece or fingers a keyboard. (Even the greatest of jazz orchestras – Duke Ellington's – needs to be thought of as an assembly of people, all with unique timbres, quirky ways of phrasing, rather than a collection of instrumentalists.) And no soloist is more speedily recognisable – elegant, lyrical, aphoristic – than Benny Carter, who for the past week has been perambulating around the North, and will, this Friday and Saturday, be performing in London at the Pizza Express (in Soho's Dean Street), a restaurant which seems to spend more and more time doubling as a jazz club.

Carter belongs to that generation of jazz musicians who gave the saxophone – something of a late-starter – equality with the trumpet, clarinet and trombone as a solo instrument. He became identified with the alto saxophone so thoroughly and so successfully that up-and-coming performers in the 1930s had only two real choices: to be buoyantly emotional, like Johnny Hodges, or dazzlingly logical, like Benny Carter. Before taking up the saxophone, Carter had tried the trumpet (he still plays it, as audiences this past week will testify, even making the tricky change of embouchure from reed to brass within a single chorus). For a time he was something of a multi-instrumentalist – nearly all the reeds, plus trombone and piano – but the alto saxophone reflected his musical temperament most directly.

When he became an arranger Benny Carter started writing for saxophones with a sensitivity and panache that nobody else has surpassed, a fact easily confirmed by listening to 'Blue Lou' (it's got one of Teddy Wilson's earliest and best solos). 'Lonesome Nights' and 'Symphony In Riffs', all the work of the orchestra which Carter was leading in 1933. Those tracks (and five more) can be found on *Ridin' In Rhythm*, a collection of early 1930s jazz (Coleman Hawkins and the Ellington and Fletcher Henderson bands are well represented). Instruments rarely get mixed up in these pieces, as they do in Ellington's scores. Quite the contrary: the sections of saxophones and brass remain carefully segregated, deployed against one another but never blended into a whole. It's a counterpart to the formal balance inside Carter's solos.

Jazz soloists employ different methods. Some take each chorus as it comes, like the hero of a picaresque novel keeping on the go. Others, including those who also happen to be composers, opt for a larger view, expanding and developing, aiming at an overall impact. It's the approach taken by Benny Carter, both in his earlier work (his style was already mature on those 1933 recordings) and on the three Pablo LPs, all recorded within the past 18 months.

The King has Carter leading a sextet (one of the performers is the vibraharpist Milt Jackson) through eight of his own tunes. The emphasis is upon musicianship, upon instrumental mastery, but without any virtuoso's rhetoric. His manner is decidedly legato, yet avoids the oiliness that even Johnny Hodges could be guilty of when operating at dead-slow tempi. And as soon as Carter begins playing the blues he shows that he has his own oblique ways of getting down to earth.

There was a time when jazz aficionados, mistaking elegance for whimsicality, confusing musical machismo with significant content, thought Carter's playing a bit airy-fairy, a judgment that should amaze anyone who listens to the other Pablo LPs, where Carter holds his own in highly competitive surroundings. When he has a mute in his trumpet Dizzy Gillespie takes perky, incisive solos, but elsewhere can sound sloppy. On this session, in fact, it was Carter who displayed the greater authority, even in Gillespie's own piece, 'Night In Tunisia'.

Basie Jam, as its title suggests, is informal, relaxed, with three tracks devoted to 12-bar blues (the fourth dishes up 'Doggin' Around', once obligatory at every British wartime jam session). Basie plays wirily, economical as ever; Joe Pass (he turns up on the other two Pablo LPs as well) is a feathery yet precise guitarist, Clark Terry a theatrical but witty trumpeter, while the tenor saxophonist, Lockjaw Davis, slithers through the chord changes like a man doing the three-card trick. The rivalry is friendly but real, though nobody comes up with a solo more shapely – or more passionate – than Carter's three choruses, spare but hinting at lushness towards the end of 'Kansas City Line'.

Benny Carter will be 70 in just over a month. Anyone unable to catch him on this trip will be encouraged to hear that he may be coming again in October. His presence is a timely rebuke to those who believe that jazzmen erupt only in their callower years, or that writing for films and TV – Carter has lived by it for well over a quarter of a century – somehow emasculates a musician's creativity. Perhaps Apollonians (Carter undoubtedly lines up with them) last the distance better than Dionysians, but that is true everywhere in the arts. Carter thrives by never taking his technique for granted – even more, perhaps, by remaining indomitably himself.

Weekend Competition

No 2470 Set by M. V. Gracechurch

The test of a man's trustworthiness always seems to be whether or not you would buy a used car from him. Competitors are asked to depict any contemporary figure doing his cunning best on the forecourt. Up to 150 words; by 15 July.

Result of No 2467 Set by B. Mooring

We asked you to write a scene from daily life illustrating the nefarious influence of a particular TV programme or series.

Report by Little Keith

> Wonder is not precisely knowing,
> And not precisely knowing not

– as the ineffable Miss Dickinson so searchingly put it. I wondered a lot at some of your entries: was I meant to discern the influence of Frank Bough or Tony Gubba, Richard Baker or Kenneth Kendall, Robin Ray or Valerie Singleton? Sometimes it was hard to tell. Fortunately, the last postbag contained several crisp and precise winners; £6 to each of them.

Mum: Look at him, slumped in a chair. And them red punctures in his skin, no mistaking *them* . . .
Pa: Good cause, mother – all those Coke tin ringpulls will help buy ping-pong tables for district nurses.
Mum: . . . and I'm fed up with a bath full of old socks, sacks full of stamps: collect, collect, it's all they do. Why can't they be junkies or muggers like all their mates?
Son: Any more deodorant tins, mum? Only another fourteen and I can send for my sweatshirt with the blue galleon mo-teef.
Mum: You're getting no more – I'm using three tins a week squirting all the places I shouldn't.
Daughter: Put the telly on Mum, I want to see *Blue Pe*-aaaargh!
Son: Steady on Mum, that sack of old false teeth would have got a pair of roller skates for a disabled postman. JIM ANTHONY

Mum: Put on those flippers and sou'wester, Eddie, and make yourself at home. You're just in time for dinner.
Dad: You're in luck, Ed, it's steak fil rouge.
Mum: Help yourself to chips, Eddie You've thirty seconds to take as many as you want straight from that sizzling-hot pan, using your British Rail plastic spoon. Ready . . . 3-2-1: GO!
Stuart: Garn, Uncle Eddie! No chips, no nosh – that's the rule. Give him a cheer, everyone!
Mum: Oh, hard luck! Maybe you'll do better with the next course.

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Dad: Yeah. You can have a trifle if you knock it off the revolving cake-stand – no, not with your spoon – shoot it down with the cork in this bottle of Nasty Spewmanti.
Stuart: Garn, uncle. Shake it hard so it goes with a right bang.
Dad: Ready . . . 3 - 2 -
Mum: Hang on, Dad, he's not on his pogo-stick yet. A. R. WIGHTMAN

'It was all right till the legs, Doctor. Why did they have to do that? Why couldn't they have left well alone? After all, even liberated chaps like John Osborne . . . Till I saw the legs it was all – well – spiritual. Never even thought she had them. Then they had to do that show.'

'When did this trouble start with your wife?'

'When we had the telly disconnected and listened to World at One instead. That night I woke to find I'd turned my wife on and was trying to heighten contrast, crying out, "Angela! Angela!" We sleep apart now, Doctor. Can't anything be done?'

'You are by no means the only case, if that helps. There was an article in *Lancet* only the other day with frightening statistics. Eysenck suggests Fiona Richmond as a nude newscaster round the clock on closed circuit. Desensitisation it's called.'

'I'll try anything, Doctor, anything . . .'
T. GRIFFITHS

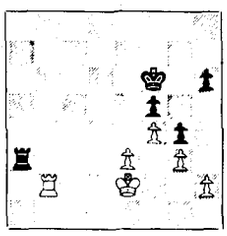
Charles: (*switching off TV*) Well, Mother, if great-great-grandpa could get away with all those women, I don't see why I shouldn't live with . . .
Queen: Hush! If your father hears you talking like that he'll . . .
Charles: What?
Anne: Castrate you, one would think. That's what one's forebear, Albert, was trying to do to poor old Edward.
Queen: (*thinking of horses*) I've never heard *that* before! It certainly wasn't shown on the series.
Mark: I think she means psychologically, Mother-in-law.
Queen: Oh, that . . .
Anne: I expect the old man didn't like the idea of his son having a bit of fun when he couldn't. (*aside to Mark*) Like Father.
Charles: We don't know he didn't.
Mark: (*aside to Anne*) Like Father!
Queen: (*thinking of horses*) Ah, well – breed will out! MAY DAY

Tony Miles
Chess

No 40 **Rook Endings**

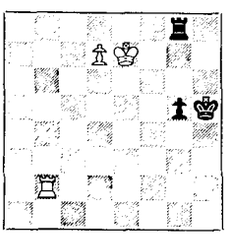
The endgame is supposedly the most neglected part of the average player's game. This is caused, to some extent, by weekend events and league matches with quick play-offs and adjudications. However two rook endings from my recent games suggest that this deficiency is not confined only to weaker players.

Consider the first position (Gerusel – Miles, Bad Lauterberg).
8/5p1p/5kp1/1R2p3/1P6/1r4P1/5P1P/6K1.
It is scarcely conceivable that this position can be won by either side – if anything White should be slightly better. Consequently my opponent was somewhat taken aback when I declined his offer of a draw. At first he did not take me seriously: **41 . . . P-R4; 42. P-R4, K-B4; 43. R-N7, P-B3; 44. R-N8, P-K5; 45. K-N2, P-N4; 46. P x P, P x P;** At last he stopped to think. A little late; his position is already difficult. Now, either refusing to believe it is possible to lose, or realising the problems and panicking, he blundered. **47. K-R3, R-N7; 48. R-N5ch, K-B3; 49. R-N6ch, K-K4; 50. R-N5ch, K-Q5; 51. R x P??** (51. R-KB5 draws.), **R x BP; 52. R x P, P-K6; 53. R-R8, P-K7; 54. R-K8, K-Q6; 55. R-Q8ch** (55. K-R4, R-B6), **K-B6; 56. R-K8, K-Q7; 57. R-Q8ch, K-K8; 58. P-N4, K-B8; 59. R-K8, P-K8=Q; 60. R x Qch, K x R and wins.**



The second position is equally drawn. Here I actually had an extra pawn but this time my opponent was stronger – the USA GM Pal Benko. He demonstrated a different, rather unlucky, method of losing. The basic principles are these: The position is drawn – sensible moves will suffice, but Black tries to 'overdraw', so to speak, i.e. he tries to analyse to a position which is completely trivial often by means of complicated and ingenious ideas. This is impractical. Once I recognised my opponent's intention I decided to play quickly and give him as many alternatives as possible to examine in the hope that he would create problems for himself.
51. R-B2. The only try is to return the pawn and activate the King. Otherwise Black simply plays K-N2-N3 and white can make no progress. **51 . . . K-N3; 52. K-Q2, K-B3;** 52 . . . P-R4! is best, but Black has a 'clever' idea. **53. R-B6ch, K-N2; 54. R-B3!, R-R7ch; 55. K-Q3, R x P; 56. P-K4, P x Pch; 57. K x P.** Now the idea is 57 . . . K-N3!? 58. R-B6ch, K-R4! 59. K-B5, R-QB7! when 60. R x R is stalemate so 60. R-K6! R-B6! (not 60 . . . R-K7, 61. R-K5!) but just in time he saw 61. K-B6!! R x P; 62. K-N7! and 63. R x P mate! **57 . . . P-R4 (Best); 58. K-B5, P-R5; 59. R-B7ch.** No better than P x P immediately – but gives Black more options. **59 . . . K-R3; 60. R-B6ch, K-N2; 61. P x P, P-N6!?** After 61 . . . R x P; 62. K-N5 and 63. P-B5 looks worrying – but only draws **62. R-N6ch, K-R2.** Not 62 . . . K-B2; 63. R-N4 and K-N5 **63. R-N4, K-R3; 64. K-B6, P-N7; 65. P-B5.** Here Black noticed to his embarrassment that his next fine intention . . . K-R4 is met by 66. R-N8! K x P; 67. K-K5! K-R6; 68. K-B4! so he reverts to a line which he could have had with two more tempi – no matter, it still draws! **65 . . . P-N8=Q; 66. R x Q, R x P; 67. R-K1, R-R7; 68. K-B7, R-R7; 69. R-K6ch! (Best try), K-R2; 70. P-B6.** Now Black must play R-R1! drawing. Unfortunately he had taken so long to solve his earlier problems, that before he could find it he lost on time!

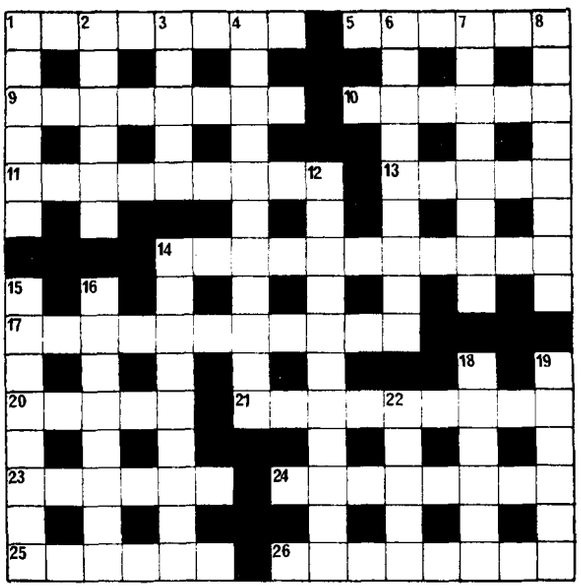
Problem 40:
White, to play, can choose between **a.** P-Q8=Q, **b.** R-QB2, **c.** R-Q2, **d.** R-KB2 and **e.** anything else. Which, if any, win, which draw and why? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than Wednesday 13 July.



Solution to Problem 38:
1. . . R x R; 2. R x R, R x N! 3. P x R, B-B4! 4. K-N4, B-Q5; 5. P-B5, B x BP; 6. K-B5, B-Q5; 7. K-K4, P-N6 wins.

Weekend Crossword 1222

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1222, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 12 July.



ACROSS

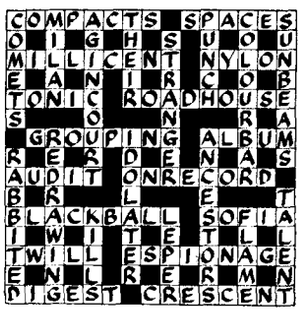
1. Aloofness makes one sit awkwardly during a social occasion (8).
5. Stops which have relative advantages (6).
9. Fishing after a penny which is hanging down (8).
10. Foreign currency for collection in seed (6).
11. Former railwaymen turned commercial gentlemen (9).
13. Behead him with time to make a likeness (5).
14. Organising a union for light industry? (11).
17. Patrons back restaurant between mountain and hills (11).
20. Service which would help to give China a fine future (5).
21. Right poet translated but a hard line to make progress on (9).
23. The next best potentially makes me top one (6).
24. Bandits who form groups if they lose their outfit (8).
25. Track partisanship? (6).
26. In need of food for tenure is not straightforward (8).

DOWN

1. The plant to tremble (6).
2. Colony of wild ponies (6).
3. The more skilful are in a justifiable rage (5).
4. State having to join before I run away (11).
6. People loving the Latin way take in a boy (9).
7. Car noise distorted in film sketch (8).
8. Wise about speed when one can get to the moon (5, 3).
12. Females freely go and cross hill (11).
14. Drury Lane vendor (6, 3).
15. Gives up an embargo on teachers (8).
16. Confection of dates and nut not eaten (8).
18. After starting softly wild cat makes sudden spring (6).
19. Not drunk without comfort in service (6).
22. 'Then imitate the action of the ——' (*K. Henry V*) (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1220



Prizewinners to No 1220
Eve Lister (Vienna)
P. Jones (Isleworth)
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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company), 836 6404. Recorded booking info: 836 5332. 'Romeo and Juliet', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'Much Ado About Nothing' in repertoire. See daily press for dates & times. RSC also at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats'.

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NATIONAL THEATRE, 928 2252. 'Volpone', 'Tales from the Vienna Woods', 'Madras House', 'State of Revolution', 'Bedroom Farce', 'To Those Born Later', 'The Camilla Ringbinder Show', 'Bow Down' & 'Strawberry Fields'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT, 730 1745. Eves 8, Sats 5 & 8.30. Max Wall & John Thaw in 'Fair Slaughter' by Howard Barker.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR, 956 1107. Until 9 July 'The Norman Conquests' by Alan Ayckbourn. 28 June-9 July 'Round and Round the Garden'.

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Entertainments

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Meetings

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'DRUGS', talk by Brian Inglis. London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun. 3 July 7.30 p.m. 30p.

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